



Lazy Dungeon Master



Volume 17 – The Third
Dungeon Battle

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Volume Seventeen - The Third Dungeon Battle

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Chapter 176 - Third Dungeon Battle, Onset Of War

I was sleeping with Meat as a hug pillow by the time I came to. Alcohol is scary.

... It's a good thing I built an alarm clock golem for stuff like this. Let's use [Healing] on my head. Aah, much better.

But it's a good thing I clocked out so fast. She might've had me drink until I died of alcohol poisoning if not. Haku-san got drunk midway too since she drank out of her machined crystal jug, saying stuff like, "Drink! Drink Beer-sama!"

For now, I just pressed down on my bedhead and poked Meat's squishy cheek.

"Nuu..."

Meat woke up and let out a voice that sounded like it was stuck in her throat. Still yawning, I left the room with Meat, who was still rubbing the sleepiness from her eyes.

Heading to the conference room—our meeting place—I joined up with Rokuko.

"Morning, Kehma. You woke up on time, huh."

"Morning, Rokuko. It's a good thing I had an alarm clock... haah, it's the first time I've been woken up by an alarm clock since I came to this world... never again... Rather, you're looking energetic."

"Eh? It's because I recharged so much at the banquet yesterday."

Rokuko's skin looked all shiny.

Being able to actually recharge from a banquet like that, isn't that some kind of talent? It just made me tired.

Ichika was already waiting by the time I made it to the meeting room too. It appears she was the first one here.

Ichika's skin was glowing as well, so it's obvious enough that she felt recharged too... ah—come to think of it, Meat's fur looks a bit glossy too. Am I the weird one here!?

“Ichika’s unexpectedly diligent. There was plenty of time to take your time.”
“Being punctual for commission deadlines and stuff’s the mark of an excellent adventurer after all. It’s common sense.”
“That so... maybe I should quit the adventurer stuff then. I only started being one to be able to enter the town.”
“... Even if it was from takin’ a shortcut, we made it to B-Rank, let’s keep at it, yeah? Yeah?”

And then Haku-san arrived. Just on time.
... Haku-san’s footsteps feel light, like she’s really looking forward to the Dungeon Battle. After all, win or lose, she’ll be able to be physically closer to Rokuko.
I’m more or less thinking of this as a war-by-proxy between Haku-san and the other upper ranking Cores though.

“Oh dear, Kehma-san, do you think you’ll lose?”
“I feel like we’ll win.”
“There shouldn’t be any problems with me relaxing then. Us upper cores (seniors) are only meant to give advice from the backseat in this Dungeon Battle. Give it your best.”
“Yeah, well, I’ll give it a shot.”
“Rokuko-chan, I’ll give you tender guidance even if you lose, alright?”
“Please treat me well if that happens, but Kehma won’t lose.”

Temporarily returning to the arena in [Cave of Desires], we passed through a gate that went directly to [White Beach]’s core room. After arriving there, we went into the Master Room inside of the Dummy Core that was placed there. I then first used [Summon Gargoyle] to summon ten Gargoyles and had them go to the place scheduled for the Dungeon Battle Gate to be. Summon-types have the flaw that when their summoner faints, they’re sent back. That’s why I waited until just before the battle to summon them.
When I finished looking over and tidying up all of the gimmicks I have scheduled to be active today, it was finally time for the Dungeon Battle to begin.

[Nooooow then, it’s time, everyone. You ready to start the Dungeon Battle?]

I suddenly heard an unfamiliar voice reverberate through the Master Room we were waiting in. It felt lackadaisical, yet somehow had a gravity to it that

made it so that you couldn't oppose it. It's a voice you wouldn't know what to think of. One of the walls turning into a monitor, a man dressed in a navy blue robe with swarthy skin, black hair, and golden eyes appeared. Half of the man's face was hidden behind a mask.

... This is [Father]? He looks younger than I expected.

[Team Demon King, prepared, father.]

[Team Dragon King, no problems, oh father.]

"Team Sovereign. We are ready, Otou-sama."

The three teams' seniors responded... Haku-san also bowed her head, he really must be great.

[Alright, let's start then—ah, before that. Do any of the junior cores have anything they want to say?]

[This is 666—695, this is our duel!]

[Hey! Ah, 650 here. I just want to say that we'll be the ones winning. Even if both of you cores work together, we have three! Three! This win is ours!]

"... This is 695, but I don't really have anything to say. Please hurry up and start, I'll be the one to win."

Rokuko said that? That's pretty self-confident.

[Hahaha, everyone's pretty motivated eh? Well then, let's start... In 5, 4, 3, 2, 1... 3-Team Dungeon Battle, START!]

At the same time that [Father] said that final word, two gates opened in the room specified beforehand with a thrumming sound.

I prepared plenty of Golems in the room. There are even some Golems carrying boxes on their backs. Inside those boxes are scouting personnel.

Moreover, immediately after that, an overflowing wave of snakes, each the thickness of an arm, poured vigorously out of one of the gates. Looks like that one's the gate for Team Dragon King.

From the other one came piles of human bones, moving with a clitter clatter noise... Skeletons. So the Demon Lord Team went with those?

While dealing with the snakes and skeletons that appeared with the Golem Corps, I gave Meat instructions.

"Guess we're starting right away. Invoke the submerging gimmick."

“Understood. First floodgate, opening.”

Meat operated the monitor.

Dodododododododo... dobaaa!

The floodgate that connected the dungeon’s floor and the ocean opened up. A vast volume of seawater flooded in through the opening, submerging the bottom most floor—the floor with the gates in it—in seawater.

The thing that was just opened was the flood gate that connected the bottom floor to the ocean.

In truth, I made sure to think about the dungeon’s shape to properly make use of the submerging gimmick for this Dungeon Battle.

It’s probably understandable just by me calling it a tower-type dungeon. With the entrance on the bottom floor, you have to capture it while moving up. Then... what would happen if water came down at you from above?

Well, I had it so that the water would come at invaders from above. Water flows downwards after all.

So that’s why I built the dungeon downwards like this. Having the entrance at the bottom floor and the core at the first floor, it’s the opposite of the normal layout... You’d have to get to the top floor by first entering the bottom floor though, so it’s the same as a normal dungeon in the sense that it is the farthest in.

“Really, Kehma-san’s way of thinking surprises me.”

“Hahaha, with the water pushing them back like this, we can block intruders better than just submerging them!”

Just submerging them wouldn’t affect opponents like golems that don’t have to breathe. However, if it’s something more like a flash flood, it’ll work like shackles—no, more like an attack.

Seeing the water flood in so strongly on the monitor, I’m confident that their self-confidence is going to collapse.

When I checked out the map, 90% of the bottom floor had already been flooded. I made sure to come up with a way to funnel the water so that the majority of the seawater’s momentum would eventually rush towards the room

with the gates in it. It's best to think of the gate room as being a ditch's final destination.

Choosing the timing, I opened the door to the gate room. Seawater flooded into the gate room, water raging like a tsunami. Swept away by the current, the snakes, skeletons, and golems were all pushed into the enemy gates.

Chapter 177 - Third Dungeon Battle, Onset Of War (Attackers' Point Of View)

Team Dragon King's PoV

[Hahaha, everyone's pretty motivated eh? Well then, let's start... In 5, 4, 3, 2, 1... 3-Team Dungeon Battle, START!]

Together with [Father] saying start, two gates opened up in the designated room. Core 650 (Giant Snake), Core 651 (Giant Frog), and Core 652 (Giant Slug) decided on going on the offense right away.

"Nooooow, go, Bite Snakes!"

"Gekokoko, I'll leave the first wave to you, 650!"

"I'm the most agile after aaaaall~"

Snakes rushed into the gates as soon as it opened.

To be precise, the gate appeared in a room packed to the brim with snakes beforehand. The plan was to make it so that invaders wouldn't be able to rush in, stopping their starting dash.

"This is the strategy we learned from 5-sama!"

"Gue gue, getting to summon so many monsters, this is the stuff we can do with so much DP!"

"There's no way we'd lose with this many monsteeers!"

Manipulating the snakes to overflow into the enemy dungeons, 650 decided to deal with the enemy forces in the rooms first. Team Sovereign's dungeon had Golems, with Team Demon King's dungeon being packed full of Skeletons. They were probably the enemies' main forces. If they just had that number of them, neither the Skeletons nor Golems were a match for the Bite Snakes' agility. That's what 650 and the others decided.

"Aaaahahaha! My cute snakes are the best!"

The snakes defeated the skeletons by coiling around their bones, breaking them. The golems were defeated by being slowly bit away at. However, their

enemies were formidable and would fight back against the snakes, smashing them, crushing them underfoot, as well as cutting them into pieces with the weapons they held.

They weren't losing forces at a 1:1 ratio, so they would win with their current number of forces. Even so, they were sustaining losses.

Well, they were giving their opponents even larger losses, so it was alright. At any rate, they didn't take much DP and had plenty to use.

—Then again, the DP their opponents could use was the same—

The current battle was proceeding smoothly, so 650 and the others didn't think about it too deeply. They could continue on with their current momentum since it was going so well, and Core 5 wasn't going out of his way to say anything either.

... And then it happened.

The door to Team Sovereign's gate room bursted open and a vast amount of water surged in.

Their gate room, which was protected from being invaded by being packed with monsters, was filled with water. The snakes that were inside it got pushed back into the passageway.

"W-wh-what the hell!? H-h-ho—stop! W-what should we do!?"

"Wha...!? Damn, that 89 used such a cowardly trick!"

"Do you know what's happening, Dungeon Core No. 5-samaaaaa!?"

Core 651 (Giant Frog) asked Core 5.

"They flooded it! It's a strategy of washing away enemies by using a mass of water, deal with the water!"

"D-deal with it!? What should we do!?"

"Calm down, 650! Snakes can swim in water. Quickly, stop the enemies that flooded in and finish them off! 651, 652, collect the other water that flowed into the dungeon where you can and cast it out of the dungeon! In places with no enemies, it's just ordinary water, so you can still deal with it, hurry! This trick will end once the water they have stored runs out, it's a disposable strategy! Even if they can do it a second time, we can use the time until they collect enough water!"

The junior cores all moved in accordance with Core 5's comments. The water came flowing in with a staggering momentum, followed by enemies, enemies, and more enemies.

Clay golems—ones that were already turned into wreckage—that had wooden boxes on their backs came pouring in, crashing into the walls along with several snakes.

Some stuff with enemy reactions came out from inside the boxes when they broke.

“H-hey, the heck are those!? Fish—eh, fish? FISH!?”

“651, you too—calm down! Use the frogs to eat the fish! We can't collect any water with enemies in it! Dammit, damn that 89! GAAAAA! If this were my battle, I'd use my Dragon Breath to instantly evaporate all of this water!!”

If it were Core 5's dungeon, it'd all be evaporated along with the enemies in the water by the Dragons that filled his dungeon.

However, this battle between their juniors was limited to 500,000 DP, an exceedingly small amount (for Core 5). For him, a battle that you couldn't even have a single Dragon simply couldn't be considered a fight. With 500,000 DP, they could only just barely summon a Lesser Dragon, a 'failure' that was barely better than a normal animal.

“Dungeon Core No. 5-samaaaa! Water, there's too much water! Nothing woooorkiiiiing!”

“It's alright, keep it up! If you don't get rid of the water, the dungeon will get filled with it!”

Core 652 did his best to collect the water as Core 5 instructed him to, draining it outside the dungeon.

However, most of the floor had already been submerged in water. The water finally reached the second floor, washing away not only the enemy's fish into it, but the Skeletons and Golems as well.

... Draining water is pretty hard.

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Team Demon King's PoV

[Hahaha, everyone's pretty motivated eh? Well then, let's start... In 5, 4, 3, 2,

1... 3-Team Dungeon Battle, START!]

Together with [Father]'s final word there, two gates opened up in the previously specified room.

Snakes overflowed from one of them. The other gate was ominously silent. She'd leave the snakes to the Skeletons.

"Bone-domos. Advance, trample them!"

Passing down her orders to the Skeletons, Core 666 watched how the situation played out.

She wasn't yet able to break into Team Dragon King's gate, but it was likely just a matter of time. Team Sovereign's room had Golems.

During the battle, some of the snakes continued attacking the Skeletons despite having the chance to move further inside from the gate room.

Core 650 and the others were likely manipulating them and not thinking about anything like that. They were incompetent. Going farther inside if a chance to do so arose was the very role of an advance party.

... Even so, Team Sovereign still hadn't invaded. They might be scheming something.

Just as she starting thinking that she was looking forward to it, water came pouring in from Team Sovereign's gate. A flood. No, a giant flood.

Golems and snakes washed into the dungeon... The Skeleton enclosure was quickly broken through, the enemies entering the dungeon.

"Haha, good one, 695! Now this is why you're a suitable rival for me!"

Seeing her own dungeon be ravished by the water, Core 666 laughed in delight.

It was time for her to get serious, too.

... She first replenished her Skeleton troops with [Summon Skeleton].

Core 666 sang the chant in a way like she was enjoying herself.

Chapter 178 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 1

Well now, our troops (fish and Golems) were taken into the enemy dungeons after being swept up by the water.

Team Dragon King had tons of snakes and frogs.

There's probably some slugs, too. Salt should be effective against them, but I wonder if seawater is too? I haven't seen any appear yet though.

Team Demon King just has skeletons.

... So that's what demon-types are like? Salt should be effective against them in another meaning, but seawater... well, I don't know. It's not working.

"Kehma, the dungeon maps for our opponents' first floors are done! Their descent on the stairs to the second floor is going nicely too!"

"Yeah, they can keep on going."

Once we reach the point that they can't go any farther, it'll be the Golem and Sahagin Corps' turn. The dungeon capture's progressing smoothly so far.

"I was a little doubtful about this strategy when I first heard you talk about it, but this flooding strategy does look quite strong... you might win with this alone, no?"

"No no, Haku-san. As you can see, there's a lot weak points to it... It doesn't seem to be effective against those Skeletons."

It looked like the Skeletons were able to move around just fine in Team Demon King's now-underwater room.

And there were two knights clad in full body black armor. They really do feel like Demon King army material, so cool... Those guys don't look like the water's bothering them at all either.

However, it looks like they aren't able to deal with the water either. If things keep up like this, their whole dungeon's going to be submerged... No, maybe that's their plan? The water won't flow anymore once the dungeon is fully submerged. It'll give my fish-type troops an advantage, but maybe they have some plan to reverse the situation?

"Let's stop the water for now. I'll lure them out and wash them all back with a

slope.”

“Okaaay~. The door’s ready to be opened whenever, Kehma!”

Stopping the water, I decided to have the Golems advance to check on them after the water settles down. I’m still holding the Gargoyles back.

... Ah, the fish that were exploring Team Demon Lord’s dungeon found the boss room on the second floor. Looks like the boss is a huge bone fish. Wonder if they set that up on the spot to deal with the flooding?

On Team Dragon King’s side, we hit the third floor. They’re doing their best in draining the seawater, so it’s decreasing bit by bit. Looks like they’re collecting the water in places that we don’t have any troops in.

Now then, I wonder how many floors each side has?

... The water settled down, so I had our Golems advance into the enemy dungeons. I can only see the map, so I just had them take the shortest routes—but our opponents obviously wouldn’t be so docile.

In Team Dragon King’s dungeon, frogs appeared, pushing their way through drowned snakes. They swung their tongues like blunt weapons to smash the golems.... Tongue Blackjacks?

In Team Demon King’s dungeon, the two black armored monsters fought like paragons. They mowed everything down by brandishing their black swords. The bare-handed Clay Golems operated by Meat don’t have any chance of winning against them.

“Setting aside Team Demon King, Team Dragon King is harder than I thought it’d be too...”

“Kehma-san... Team Dragon King has Core 5. He’s a muscle-brain, but his specialty is accordingly fighting. As such, they should be able to fight after receiving his teaching.”

“G-got it, Haku-san. I won’t let my guard down.”

Being vigilant towards Team Dragon King, I had the fish and Clay Golems go to places they could. There should be traps that 5 taught them about, too.

Let’s try sending some sharks over to Team Demon King’s side to see if we can defeat that boss.

“Ichika, are the sharks ready? We’re in a stand-off right now, so send three

small ones in. Press in.”

“Aye! Sharks, going~!”

Three shark fins—err, three small sharks headed into Team Demon King’s gate. The dungeon’s turned into a fully submerged dungeon, so the small sharks should be able to perform well while our enemies should have their movements dulled by the water resistance.

Two of them were slain by the black armors, but one of them was able to make its way through.

Hmm? Come to think of it, that’s the first time we lost DP, huh. Ah, right, I lost the magic stone costs for those Golems. I got rid of a lot of our opponent’s Skeletons too though.

“I’ll leave that bone miniboss to you, Ichika.”

“Aye, I got it~. I’ll crunchy crunch it with my shark~!”

As that happened, our opponent made a move as well. One of the black armors dove into Team Dragon King’s dungeon.

It then started slaughtering our other opponent’s snakes and frogs... Yep, she probably sunk a ton of DP into that thing. It’s seriously strong.

“Kehma, our first room’s defenses were broken through!”

Turning the remaining Golems in our first room into our assault, our defenses had been thinned out quite a lot.

Enemy Skeletons and snakes were diving into our dungeon too. Looks like we lured them in nicely.

“... Well, pour Stock 1.”

“Okay~. Opening Stock 1 room’s door~”

A lot of fluid spilled out.

“... Oh? Kehma-san. Is... that what I think it is? Tentacle Slime body fluids?”

“Yeah, it is.”

“Going onto... the slope?”

“Yep.”

Other than the Tentacle Slime’s body of slime, its body fluids almost completely nullify physical attacks.

A Tentacle Slime's body fluids are very slippery and, well, slimy. Slippery stuff. By the way, it's also effective in improving blood circulation, but let's ignore that.

What would happen if it was poured onto a slope?

—Well, we should take a look at the mass of bones and snakes on the monitor for our answer.

Chapter 179 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 2

Team Dragon King's PoV

A black armor suddenly appeared and started crushing the snakes and frogs.

"Uaaaaah! What's this this black thiiiiiiing!? 666, the heck did you summon!?"

"Calm down, 650. It appears to be mobile despite being submerged, so it should be a living armor type. Surround it! Use your numbers and deal with it!"

"Like this, No. 5-samaaa!?"

However, the difference in strength between it and both the frogs and snakes was too big. Each time the black armor brandished its sword, snakes were split in two and many frogs' tongues were severed, lowering their capability drastically.

Some individuals were simply crushed, trampled by the weight of its armor.

Following Core 5's instructions and attacking it from all sides with frogs, several attacks finally hit their mark. It was also bit as the snakes snapped at its legs.

However, whatever the black armor was made from made it so that the Bite Snakes' fangs and the Big Frogs' tongues had little to no effect on it.

"Tch, this thing is practically like God's Vanguard. The monsters can only make it stand still huh."

"No 5-saaama, the water's settled dooown! Should I send monsters too?"

"Alright, 652, send your snakes to invade... Have you prepared monsters that can work in water? Oi! Can you get Sea Snakes!?"

"Y-yesss! Doing it now!"

Core 650 summoned snakes that could swim underwater. Although underwater snakes couldn't live on land, they were suitable given the current situation. He sent a few of them into Team Demon King's dungeon straight away.

... Ah, come to think of it, I get the feeling Sea Snakes can't live if they aren't in sea water huh... must be my imagination. With that, Core 5 decided to stop thinking about it.

“651, you go on the offense as well. 652, attack Team Sovereign. 651, attack Team Demon King. 650, keep on defending... dammit, I don't have enough workers. Why aren't your underlings here?”

Right now, this dungeon was the only one to have three cores operating it. In this fight that was a three-way team battle, having three was already pushing the limit. Well, although they should've been able to use their subordinates—

“”” B-because there's no way we thought they'd eat each other!! “””
“Stingy fools! That's why you should summon intelligent monsters! Come on, thanks to that we don't have enough workers nor DP!”

—Right, the monsters they used their specially-given DP on to summon and be their supporters were, respectively, a snake, a frog, and a slug. These guys, lacking intelligence as always, took their eyes off of them for just a bit. When they came back, there were only carcasses remaining.

As expected, this left Core 5 at wits' end.

After all, he had a somewhat optimistic view about this since his side had three cores.

“Alriiight, I got control of Team Sovereign's firsst room! Advanciing!”
“Geko, the black armor for Team Demon King is in the way on my end... I'll leave them to you, 652.”

The Bite Snakes were manipulated by Core 652, the slug. They almost carelessly attacked the Skeletons, but here, they were mutual enemies to an enemy. They headed farther inside together.

“Alright, alright. Here we gooo, up the slooope!”

Once they were moving up the slope, a viscous liquid flowed down. With no room to avoid it, the snakes and bones all got swallowed up by it. The bones were washed away, but the snakes were stuck to the slope. With this, they were one step ahead of Team Demon King... however.

“Ugueeh! W-what's that!? Uwaah, uwaaaaah!”
“What's wrong, 652? Tell me!”
“The snaakes, they can't move at aaaaall! It's too sliimy!”

Unable to move because of the slimy liquid engulfing them, the snakes writhed in attempt to break free, but only managed to push themselves down the slope.

Their momentum gradually built, until...

Bang!

They crashed into the skeletons that were trying to make their way up.

“W-what... what can I dooo...”

The slimy liquid kept them stuck wriggling on the ground. Inevitably, the snakes’ bodies twined around each other, making it even worse. Even giving it their all, they still weren’t be able to make their way up the slope. Core 652 sighed, thinking that he could do something if there were slugs there, but the only things there were, unfortunately, snakes.

“Aaaaaah! Those bones’re in the waaay! Ugeh, they’re stepping on them!”

“Use them as rides, coil around the bones, 652!”

“O-okaaaay!”

Despite doing as Core 5 instructed and having the Bite Snakes coil around the Skeletons, they just turned into weights for the Skeletons and caused them to slide along the slippery ground back toward the bottom.

“Didn’t woork, the footing’s too slippeeeeery!”

“Hah!? Slippery!? Ssswitch with me, 652! Snakes originally moved on water! Bad footing like thisss isn’t something that should ssstop them!”

“Ah, ch-change! Switch! —! Uaaah!? The black armooooor!”

Replaced, Core 652 panicked because of the black armor that was decimating them. Core 650, on the other hand, was calm.

“Alriiight, I’m going! I can jussst use the walls if the floor’s no good! These ssstone walls are more than enough!”

Manipulating the snakes, Core 650 had them move up the wall. Avoiding the slimy floor, he felt they’d make it through and—it happened at that moment. Water that was filling the passageway suddenly flushed all of them away.

Chapter 180 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 3

Huh. So snakes can move along walls? That was a blind spot. Even though most of walls were covered with slime as well, the [Lotion Slope] was, unexpectedly, easily overcome. The cause might be because slime doesn't really build up on walls so it wasn't that effective.

"Oh, is that alright? You'll wash away all of your precious Tentacle Slime juice."

"I was hoping that we could use it to gain a bit more time, but it got overcome rather quickly... Well, I have another three rooms' worth to use on the upper floors still."

With that, I opened the flood gate and hit the reset button by washing everything away.

Looks like I can still use the flood attack. It feels like flushing the toilet though...

Ah, for the slimy slopes, the difficulty will get harder on the upper floors since I put the Gargoyles there to rain down magic on them from above. There's even a place they have to cross over a thin bridge that doesn't have any handrails...

... Huh? Aren't snakes unexpectedly strong? They could just cross it like they would a tree branch.

Well, it's fine. Snakes are snakes, there's lots of ways to deal with them.

"Still though, Team Demon King's second black armor hasn't made a move yet?"

"Yeah, it's still clearing out the snakes and Golems in the entrance room! So eerie."

"How about their bone fish boss?"

"I'm chasin' it with the shark, but it's pretty quick. I'll get it soon!"

Team Demon King's dungeon is almost entirely filled with water now.

The traps that were planted in their passages were rendered ineffective from the water, making things go very well for Team Sovereign (us), but Haku-san said that, "6 wouldn't let it end with that."

... Conversely, you're saying that there's a good chance it'll continue on as-is for

Team Dragon King?

Ah, we reached Team Dragon King's fifth floor already? That was fast. Isn't there a boss? It's like the mermen are on vacation or something.

"Goshujin-sama. Enemies have reached the second floor."

Hearing Meat's report, I looked at the monitor. Those snakes and bones that got washed away had all ascended the slope again. I'm going with the stance that [We can't flood again immediately] even if we can do it whenever, so I let them up this time. Let's constantly flush them out when they get to the higher floors. It'll affect more stuff that way. Water flows downwards after all.

"Alright, how about we use some DP to harass them?"

"Oh? What kind of harassment do you have in mind?"

"You'll know once you see it."

And so I summoned a monster.

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Team Demon King's Point of View

"Oh... so water won't be used this time?"

Core 666 said in a somewhat disappointed tone.

Summoned by [Summon Skeleton], the Skeletons were continuing to march, but their progress was slow going.

Furthermore, their Black Steel Living Armor on Team Dragon King's side had just sliced a tough-skinned huge slug that was around three meters long in half. Well, even if its skin was hard, it was just to the degree of being iron-like, so her master-manipulated Living Armor was able to kill it more than easily. They hadn't spent that much DP on it for nothing.

Its movements had dulled somewhat due to the water—due to the seawater, but it was still a boss.

Well, let's leave our Zack to taking care of their troops.

Master looks like he's having fun operating the Living Armor, so it's probably better that I don't interrupt him.

—What is important is Team Sovereign's dungeon.

The corners of Core 666's mouth raised a little in anticipation of what might appear next.

After ascending and making it through the slope, there was a small room. There were no branches in the path. This dungeon was practically a single path, it didn't really need to be explored at all. It was probably because it was specialized to direct the water. After all, the less places that the water could lose its vigor, the better.

There were Gargoyles in the small room. They attacked the Skeletons by hurling balls of fire and balls of water at them.

"Heeh, that's quite a lot for them to handle. It might be too much for the Skeletons—however, I have the numbers advantage."

Manipulating the Skeletons, Core 666 surrounded each Gargoyle with five Skeletons. They only had bone weapons on them, but they could manage if they were able to disrupt the Gargoyles' mana by constantly hitting it. Even if no single attack was fatal, the Gargoyle would eventually fall from the accumulated damage.

However.

Bite Snakes attacked the Skeletons that were surrounding the Gargoyles.

"Oh? Have they gone senile?"

They shook off the pests hanging from them. Throwing the Bite Snakes off, they were beheaded.

And when she looked, the skeletons were attacking the Bite Snakes even though she hadn't ordered them to.

"... Heeh. I didn't think about something amusing like that."

When she looked at the map, they didn't have the blue color that signified they were allies.

In this three-way Dungeon Battle, all enemies had red markers. In other words, these red Skeletons of hers were enemies to them.

And so, Team Dragon King's snakes also had red markers... In other words, the Skeletons should look like [Team Demon King's Skeletons] to Team Dragon King. There was even the possibility that the Bite Snakes that had attacked a moment ago were Team Sovereign's monsters. Or, perhaps, it was just that Team Dragon

King mixed in with them, simply tricking them before attacking in revenge? ... The possibility of that was greater.

It wasn't as though they had to give her any hints to work with, after all.

—Core 666 had just realized that believing [My enemy's enemy is my ally] was [Naive].

“Kukuku, so that's how you want to do this!? Good, good! I'll do it your way then! I'll take care of these statues first and come after your snakes next—! I'll slaughter you all!”

She should have done it like this from the start. Enemies are enemies, even if they are the enemy's enemy. She didn't have to do something so incompetent as cooperate with them.

“Aah, what a fun battle this is!”

Core 666 smiled from the bottom of her heart.

*

—Core 6 watched on in silence.

Since the start of this Dungeon Battle, he hadn't interfered at all. Even when it came to how to make the dungeon, he left everything to Core 666 and her master.

Core 6 didn't trust Core 666's master at all.

Her master was originally a swordsman-type human that came from a human farm. Trusting livestock wasn't something that should be done. If you did, it would be for trusting them to become some good DP.

On a certain day, a human that should've been [Crushed] became Core 666's master, so it was decided that he would serve as Core 666's [Servant]. Since then, that human hadn't displeased Core 666 ever—it appeared that she had scolded him to train him occasionally though—and had survived to this day.

He decided to use this Dungeon Battle as a sort of test case for Core 666's master.

If he was [Usable], then it would be fine.

If he was [Unusable], then he would have to think of something. He even considered disposing of this master under the guise of [Guidance].

And so, like this, Core 6 sat back and observed in silence.

Chapter 181 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 4

[Right, Kehma-kun, there's something I wanted to ask you. That alright? There's no aquatic-type core right now. If I had to say why, it'd be that they wouldn't be able to come to the party... Kehma-kun. Do you think that something like a merman-type core could come to the party?]

"... Couldn't they participate if you hosted it next to the sea or at a pool or something? I mean, couldn't they participate even if you just put a big bucket on a wagon? Or maybe you could just have them know humanization from the start? I've heard stuff about mermen like that before.—Ooh, couldn't they just have some sort of skill that let them swim in the air?"

[Ooooh, good, good. As expected of Kehma-kun. I'll make a note of that!]

[Father] suddenly opened communications with us. He asked me a question, so I gave him a suitable response.

Please don't make a personal consultation during a battle, referee!

"Kehma, you were able to respond like usual with Tou-sama? Amazing!"

"He's your Tou-chan right? I'm just going with that kind of feeling."

He's Rokuko's father, so I decided to not care even if he was God. There's no reason for me to worry about it.

"To call him Tou-chan... that's rather impolite to Otou-sama, Kehma-san."

[Un? I don't mind, call me what you like. Well, I wouldn't mind even if Kehma-kun called me Otou-san... ah, I'd actually prefer him to call me Father-in-Law-san you know? Lyon-kun used that for me.]

Listening to us like it was nothing, he answered. Oi, who's this Lyon-kun guy? When I was thinking about that, Ichika whispered it into my ear.

... Ah, so he's the first emperor of the Raverio Empire. In other words, Haku-san's master, huh? Looks like he even turned into their currency. One copper coin is 1 Lyon.

"It would be nice if you avoided speaking of that man, Otou-sama. He's a past mistake."

[Gotcha.]

Hearing them talk about him like a normal father and daughter, it felt somewhat strange. So the first emperor's an ex-boyfriend huh... ah, I'm sensing bloodlust from Haku-san. Nothing to see here! Nothing!

*

Well, back on topic now, I made a move against the snakes with the [Skeletons] I summoned and mixed into their midst by taking advantage of their turmoil while fighting against the Gargoyles.

Team Dragon King splendidly retaliated against Team Demon King's Skeletons. How gullible are these guys? Team Demon King took it a step further though. They started annihilating Team Dragon King's snakes.

... From the looks of it, I'd say that after finishing off the Gargoyles, they decided that Team Dragon King was simply a nuisance after our meddling.

The snakes started dashing away like baby spiders, so it was decided that they'd advance separately... Well, the dungeon's practically a single path the whole way because of the water though. The only branches really, particularly on lower floors, are just the flood gates' areas. They're basically just dead ends.

It doesn't look like they annihilated all of the snakes for now, but it looks like they're definitely going to make it through the areas separately.

I appreciate that. I didn't want to think about how good two teams working together would be.

"Ah, I should replenish the Gargoyles huh."

I repeatedly used the incantation for [Summon Gargoyle]. It's a pain, but Haku-san's right here.

The summoned Gargoyles went out to counterattack.

... Ah, the next floor's a completely submerged area? Before making their way up an ascending staircase, it was a floor that they had to first make their way down a staircase into water.

For another way to picture it, think of the bend just below a toilet. It's the thing that prevents pests from making their way into the bowl from the sewers.

As a dungeon restriction, there had to be a point where they could take a rest and breathe air on the way since a dungeon that couldn't be captured was an out, so it wasn't right to say it was completely submerged, but still...

Setting aside the snakes, the Skeletons didn't need the rest point at all.

"I'll send the Gargoyles to wait at the rest point just in case. They have the magic skill [Spark] since they'll be at a place where everything's drenched in sea water... but still..."

"? Is there something to be uneasy about, Kehma? It sounds like it'll work to me."

"... I wonder if electricity works against bones..."

"Oooh."

It'd mess muscles up pretty bad, but they're just bone.
I glanced at Haku-san.

"If you have something you want to ask, please go and ask it. [Spark] is a light-type magic, so it is effective against Skeletons."

"Ah, so it's that sort of thing?"

"I don't know what you mean by 'that sort of thing' though?"

But well, those bones are just going to skip the rest point. The snakes will probably take a break there though.
Even if I tried having them use [Spark] from the surface of the water—it'd scatter in the water, so it wouldn't work.

And that's how the defense is going, but what about the offense?

"Ichika, Meat. How's our attack going?"

"Team Demon King's dungeon, just now won against that bone fish with the shark. The boss room door popped open so I sent the sardines into the third floor to explore."

"Team Dragon King's dungeon, the black armor is obliterating, so I left it to Team Demon King and am just searching and guiding. It's going well. Also, slugs appeared in defense. They are crowding the ceiling. Should I project it onto the monitor?"

Let's not look at Team Dragon King's dungeon. It's doing alright. What's on my mind is how to go about interrupting the enemy team that are invading us together. Well, they'd be better off cooperating in trying to capture the dungeon. They'd make progress.

There's a hand I prepared but haven't used, but well, there's no reason for me

to use it if I can win without it.

It looking like they are progressing, so let's add some water to slow them down before they get to the submerged area.

"Alright, open the gates~. Leave them open for a while and drain the water into the enemies' dungeons."

"Kay~. For where they are... the third flood gate? Opening!"

Dodododo... the seawater surged, overtaking the Skeletons and snakes.

"... Oh?"

"Kehma, emergency! The aren't getting swept away!"

The snakes were washed away. However, the Skeletons anchored down by clinging to the walls.

Lining up single file against the wall, the Skeletons sliced through the water current.

By having one of them take the brunt of the water's momentum, they were able to make it easier on all the rest.

This is a method used by several groups to counter flash flooding... our opponents figured it out faster than I thought. Was it because of a hint from Core 6? Or maybe it was Core 666 or the master's ability to cope?

"Leave the water going for a while. It doesn't look like they're able to move while the water's flowing, so I'll throw something at them."

"G-got it."

Loading a Gargoyle up into a [Mana Potion (Barrel)], I put it into the water current and had it hit the Skeletons.

The barrel and several of the Skeletons broke, so I sent more Gargoyles in.

The Skeletons weren't able to hold up, so their formation collapsed and they got washed away.

I decided to have the Gargoyles that got washed into Team Dragon King's dungeon along with the Skeletons continue on and explore.

... I wonder if they'll think up a countermeasure for the Gargoyle-in-a-barrel? Let's come up with something else.

Chapter 182 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 5

Team Demon King's Point of View

The water was unexpectedly troublesome.

Even though they could deal with it, they couldn't advance. By the time that the water had finally stopped, Team Demon King's dungeon was underwater all the way to the third floor, so another bone fish boss would go there. This time, they learned from their opponent and went with mixing a single boss in with sardine-like small fish.

"... Haah, it looks like the DP I was saving till today is running out too."

Core 666 let out a sigh.

For now, she summoned some more Skeletons and sent them into Team Sovereign's dungeon.

The Skeletons were all moving together like a centipede and somehow managed to endure the water current and advance.

... But thanks to that, she realized a new way to deal with the water. She could use this.

"695 is fit to be my rival after all..."

When Core 666 had the Skeletons advance forward, she found a small room near a stairway. The stairs descended into water. It appeared she took the wrong way—or maybe not. Perhaps the floor was pre-submerged?

At any rate, the Skeletons were basically expendable, so Core 666 sent the Skeletons in.

It was like the bottom of the sea.

There was practically no light and there was seaweed growing in it. It all shook side to side, making the visibility even worse.

When they looked up from in the water, there appeared to be a small room with light coming from it, looking like moonlight.

"This is a very stylish floor."

However, it was still a dungeon. Naturally, it would have traps.

When she tried having the Skeletons use their hands to push the seaweed aside and open a path, their hands abruptly fell off.

“...? Did something happen? No—is something there?”

She had the Skeletons advance further to make sure, but their arms fell off just like their hands had.

“... That’s... Jiji-sama, what is that?”

Hearing Core 666’s question Core 6 looked at the monitor. It was hard to see, but 6 was able to see something. It was thread—orichalcum-made thread that had been stretched incredibly thin.

“Hoh. It appears to be thread made from orichalcum... How was it made so thin, though?”

“Orichalcum!? Come to think of it, 695 was wearing an orichalcum ring, Jiji-sama.”

“She was? Perhaps she has a skilled master dwarf blacksmith... Right, I’ll show you an orichalcum ingot next time, it looks quite lovely.”

“Fufu, sounds fun. It’s a promise.”

Still, thread? She didn’t even have a way to cut it, it was orichalcum. No matter how thin it was, orichalcum couldn’t be broken without the dwarves’ processing methods. In other words, there was no way for her to remove the thread.

When she looked around, the passage divided into the current way and a side path. The current way was filled with the thread. And ahead, the path that was divided in two merged back together.

The thread was placed like some sort of crude web.

It didn’t matter for the Skeletons, but there appeared to be a small room beyond the web that you could take a breath in.

So if you tried to run straight through the passage to try and get a breath of air—you would be sliced into small pieces.

“... So that’s it.”

Core 666 guessed that it could also be used with the water trap. The thread was sharp enough to slice through bone just by touching it. If they

were pressed against it by the force of the water, they'd likely turn into mesh-shaped mincemeat (bone in this case). Just imagining it was gross. It was wonderful.

“Jiji-sama, what if you used your magic sword?”

“I'd avoid doing it. My magic sword has the [Indestructible] property, so it could do it, but even so, breaking through orichalcum takes too much effort.”

“Heeh... even Jiji-sama's magic sword...”

Using [Summon Skeleton] yet again, Core 666 smiled daringly.

Chapter 183 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 6

I caused a water current to start up in the submerged floor. Water's just coming in from the floor above though.

If I let the water drain down from above into the drainage traps, the water will flow downward.

Is it hard for them to hold their ground underwater? The Skeletons were sliced into small pieces by the orichalcum wire like gelatin.

... Fufufu, this wire's super effective...!

"Orichalcum thread... it's good that you could prepare such fine thread."

"Yeah, there's a skilled master blacksmith at our village."

Let's go with that. Well, I'm the one that actually made it of course.

Taking out the four orichalcum coins that Rokuko got from the 1,000 DP gacha, I tried out making them into superfine threads like fiberglass. It was enough just making it thin enough that it started drooping. It looked like what I saw on TV before.

Using [Create Golem] to manipulate the orichalcum's even easier than the normal way used to forge iron, I'm in full control too.

I was a bit worried about its strength since it was so thin, but it almost sliced through my fingers when I tried picking it up. Rather, it's at the point that Iron Golem would easily get sliced up.

And that's all despite it being thinner than a hair. Orichalcum is scary.

I was somehow able to pick it up after attaching handles to both ends of the one meter long orichalcum wire. I ended up making a crazy level wire.

(Keeping it cheap by using iron for the handles, I made it by having it adhere to the orichalcum.)

"Maybe I should have something made next time?"

"Please ask through me, that person is a little obstinate. Even if you talked to him directly, he'd just say stuff like [It can't be made!]."

"Really? Well, keeping capable craftsmen on a leash is important. I'll leave the ordering to Kehma-san when the time comes, then."

Concerning the orichalcum processing, I already more or less revealed it with the ring.

Eh, well, there's a pretty big difference in difficulty between making a ring and making a wire that's thinner than a hair though.

"Hey Kehma. It's a middle level at this submerged floor right?"

"Yeah, it's that kind of feeling."

"So then that means it's turning around? What's it like on enemies' sides?"

"Let's see what's going on in Team Dragon King's dungeon. Meat?"

"... First of all, we reached the seventh floor in Team Dragon King's dungeon. It is the seventh floor, but this boss room isn't a miniboss, it's the dungeon's last boss."

... There weren't any decent gimmicks in their maze at all. They were all meant to be used against humanoids, so they practically didn't affect the fish at all. Even for Team Demon King's Black Armor, its armor's strength was so strong that it was unhurt. The only effective trap against it was the skewer trap, but that's normal.

I never thought that we'd make it that far so easily.

Now we only need to look forward to the dungeon boss, but the Black Armor's super motivated and swinging its black sword around. Our turn isn't going to show up, is it?

I mean, there's a decent chance that it'll turn on us if we tried interrupting the fight.

Let's let it do whatever.

"How is it progressing in Team Demon King's dungeon?"

"Nn, we're at another boss-like room on the fifth floor. Feels miniboss-ish."

There's a big skeleton guarding the door that leads farther in.

It's probably a boss monster they prepared to use from the start, unlike the bone fish from the second floor.

Unlike how the bone fish felt like it was prepared after seeing their dungeon get flooded, this one feels like it belongs in this dungeon.

Although this dungeon had the usual traps like spring noose traps, pitfall traps, and traps that would shoot arrows at you if you touched a wire, they were all just shabby.

I don't know what'll happen after this, but I won't be careless.

More of those Black Armor monsters might appear as the dungeon boss.

“! Kehma! The Black Armor that was in Team Demon King's dungeon entrance came to our dungeon!”

Seriously? They're finally going to try and capture us seriously huh. Taking a look, a Black Armor was walking into our dungeon with a lot of Skeletons. It was surrounded by the Skeletons, so it looks like it's wary of traps.

“Let's try giving them a dose of water to chew on. Open the first floodgate.”
“Kay~”

I added a Barrel Gargoyles while we were at it. Now then, what'll they do? Their response appeared immediately.

A few of the skeletons in the front were struck by the barrel, but the Black Armor cutting the Gargoyle that appeared from inside it in half with its sword. Then, they probably replenished their forces through a summon-type skill like [Summon Skeleton].

It was used a lot during that fight at Team Demon Lord's dungeon entrance, but summon-type skills really are strong, huh. They can keep on replenishing pawns for free.

I followed their lead and used [Summon Gargoyle]. If a single Barrel Gargoyle's no good, what about five? What about ten? Well, it probably won't have much effect, but... Gargoyle-kuns. I'll leave it to you.

... It feels like they're resenting me from being used as sacrifices, so don't come back even if you survive, kay?

Aah, if that's the case maybe it's easier using [Summon Skeleton] like this? They're dead from the start after all. Ah, but there's that scary grudge feeling huh. Which way would be better then... Hmm.

“What now? Gonna keep the water goin'?”

“No, it's better if we keep them going only for short intervals rather than constantly flowing. The strongest thing about it is the initial punch of the water current after all. And so—take out [The Big Ball]. We'll be using it here.”

“Finally! [The Big Ball], go!”

Rokuko manipulated the monitor in glee and and room that stored [The Big

Ball]—it was placed on the ceiling—swung open.

Then, [The Big Ball]... a gigantic ball of iron, fell down the slope.

It's something pretty common in certain adventure films.

Following the obvious combination of [Gravity + Slope + Ball], [The Big Ball] slowly rolled down the hill.

To say it another way, the ball was a huge bowling ball. The enemies? Our pins.

While on the subject, it's made to be just barely the same size as the passage. It can't be avoided unless you're in a room. Even if you cut in half, its crazy momentum would stay the same!

[The Big Ball] moved slowly at first, but it gradually picked up speed. By the time it encountered that Black Armor it'd be strong enough to knock them into their next life.

What, even though it just barely fits the passage, that means there's a little room in the corners? Those are blocked, so don't worry. There's no room to dodge. The remnants of those snakes are all just red spots now!

Moreover, this trap was Haku-san's idea. She recommended it because I'd already prepared the slope, which it needed. It really is stronger than a water current.

"Fufufu, the fusion of my idea for a trap and Rokuko-chan's dungeon... this is wonderful."

"Y-yeah."

"Gooo! [The Big Ball]! Realize my and Haku Ane-sama's strength~!"

Its momentum at the max, the iron ball encountered the Black Armor-led group of Skeletons.

Chapter 184 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 7

Its momentum at the max, the iron ball encountered the Black Armor-led group of Skeletons.

It happened in an instant.

The Skeletons were destroyed. Their bone fragments scattered in all direction. And—

—no longer spinning, the iron ball had been pierced by a red magic sword.

The Black Armor stabbed the red-hot glowing magic sword into the iron ball, bringing its momentum to a stop.

When it swung its magic sword several more times, red lines ran across the iron ball.

It melted.

“... Huh?”

My mouth hung wide open. I mean like, that was an iron ball big enough to fill the passage, you know? I never thought that they'd be able to stop something with that much mass and momentum with a single sword. Seriously.

Also, just how much heat did they use to actually be able to melt that thing?

“Uwah, even though I didn't think they could do it... they melted Haku Ane-sama's big ball!”

“They overcame it splendidly. Well, things like this can happen, too... Oh? Rokuko-chan, that magic sword... isn't it Core 666's?”

“Really? Ah, it is... wait, no way, the Dungeon Core herself's taking part!?”

“Eh—. I thought it was just a Living Armor though?”

I thought the Living Armor would just be empty on the inside though... So you could use it like that too huh. Well, I'm using Golems like that after all.

Dungeon Cores don't actually need to breathe, so there's no problem even if they're underwater... or maybe her true form is this Living Armor?

“Really, those fellows from the Demon King Faction are all so belligerently troublesome... Hahhh...”

Haku-san sighed and held her hand against her temple.
Perhaps it's like this a lot with the Demon King Faction? Maybe they're all a set with dungeon boss-like true forms.

"... Well, yep. Ichika, send our Sahagins into Team Demon King's dungeon. Now's our chance since the Black Armor isn't there."

"Roger~"

"Meat, do you need reinforcements?"

"I think we should wait and see a bit longer? Gargoyles would be helpful."

"Got it. I'll go and summon some."

Using [Summon Gargoyle], I sent them to the bottom floor's flood gate room. ... It's a bit late for it, but the Gargoyles can move between floors. They use the non-standard route of traveling through the sea outside the dungeon. There's a flood gate room like a space ship's airlock on each of the floors, so using that route, they can get to any floors I want them to. They can even move about without causing floods if I just collect the water.

As far as outside invaders are concerned, our response is shutting the gates firmly. There's a proper route to use, so please use it.

"Mu, the Black Armor has already reached the submerged area on the middle floors."

"Muu, we can't use [The Big Ball] against 666 anymore huh?"

"Just in case, prepare another one to hit them right after leaving the submerged area. Let's try adding water with it so that it won't be melted."

It might be at the point of being accidentally lethal to Core 666, but it's probably worse that she came to the front lines as the Dungeon Core in the first place.

"... For argument's sake, it won't be my fault even if Core 666 dies right?"

"Well, there are accidents in Dungeon Battles. Feel free to kill her."

I got Haku-san's approval. Let's keep with it then.

"Middle floor, release the water. Let's have the orichalcum wire give them a hug."

"Okay~"

"Ah, go with a counter-current too. They won't be able to hold their ground as

easily.”

“Oh, then we’ll need to open another gate from another direction?”

It’s the middle layer, but we can pour water in from the lower area on the opposite side.

By using that huge amount of water to cause a counter-current, the water current should jolt about, chopping them up finely with the orichalcum wires.

*

Team Demon King’s Point of View

“That was... a little scary.”

That iron ball had a lot of force behind it. She was almost too late in reacting because she thought there’d only be that water.

She almost got squashed to death, but she succeeded in dealing with it. She shivered from the thrill. This—this was what she wanted.

“Aahhh—this is so much fun!”

She couldn’t help herself from smiling.

This is what Core 666 lived for, the excitement she all but begged for.

Tranquility was nothing but a poison, one that dulled the mind and senses.

“Battles are amazing. Wisdom, traps, strategy! 695, I wonder, are you feeling this pleasure too?”

Core 666 absolutely wanted to share this delight with a [Rival (Friend)]. She’d felt this way for a long time.

—However, that hadn’t come true. Until now, at least.

Why was this? It was because Core 666 was superior to all other cores in the 600 Series (her generation). No other core in it could compare to her. Even the previous 500 Series of cores ended up refraining when it came to Core 666.

She truly respected the strong ones in those previous series, but as far as what she felt towards those who were at the same or weaker than herself, a 600 Series (the youngest generation), she felt they were pathetic.

That is why she didn’t have a [Rival (Friend)].

But for this Core 695, a member of the same series as her—she might possibly be able to become a [Rival (Friend)] that she could share these feelings with.

It was like her thirst was being quenched for the first time. It was painfully irresistible, she wanted more of it. More.

The pleasure of her empty pot made of insatiable desire being appeased... she wanted it so badly.

If she had something like a [Rival (Friend)]—she couldn't think of a better word—that she could enjoy it with, she would definitely want to trample and wreck them. That would be the best.

[Aidi, I defeated Team Dragon King's boss. I found the core.]

At that moment, an indifferent report came from her master. The voice that called Core 666 [Aidi] belonged to a youth. It was a report that he'd suppressed them.

"Continue on, break it. How did you overcome it?"

[It wasn't a big deal. They failed.]

It seemed that a Poison Wyvern appeared as the boss.

[I didn't expect that the poison from its breath would explode, but that's all.]
"Hmm."

Poison wouldn't work against the Living Armor her master was operating at all, but it appeared that it scraping against the cobblestone floor with its claws after the room was filled with poison resulted in an explosion.

So that was their trump card?

It was surprising, but that's all it was.

"Will you come over here when you destroy the Dummy Core?"

[I will. I just destroyed it.]

As though to confirm her master's report, [Father] opened communications.

[Alright~, Team Dragon King lost! Sorry, 5, you're out of the running.]
[Ugaaaah! To lose heeeeeeeere!?!?]
[[[Sorry, 5-samaaaaa!]]]

Those nuisances' grief was audible.
With this, the nuisances were taken care of.

"Finally, it's just me and 695. Let's have some fun."

Core 666 advanced further into Team Sovereign's dungeon.
Compared to the majesty of the Living Armor's armor, its footsteps as it advanced were joyful.

Chapter 185 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 8

Team Dragon King wound up losing without even getting anything done. Reasonable. That's the word that crossed through my mind. Team Dragon King was constantly repressed by the floods and slaughtered by the Black Armor in the Dungeon Battle.

"Well, the Sahagins would've been annihilated if I sent them against that boss though."

We didn't have a problem like that thanks to the Black Armor, but they would've been nothing but sacrifices to a big shot like that Poison Wyvern. That would've set us back.

"Ichika, how is it going on your end?"

"A little more. The Sahagins arrived, I can win."

The Sahagins and the shark were tossing a big skeleton that was the boss about in a room that got submerged.

In particular, it looked like there was a Sahagin Rider on a swordfish that looked rather strong. From the looks of its bones, it'll be defeated in a bit as Ichika said.

"What about that Black Armor that went to our side? It didn't go and defend."

"They're going all out on their offence, aren't they. We should use [The Big Ball] again!"

"Yeah. Let's put it to use while the Black Armor is in the lower floor. While we're at it, collect the first floor's water and dump it outside."

Since Team Dragon King's gate, which had kept on gulping down our water, ended up being closed, if we don't discard it ourselves the water would accumulate pretty fast.

We'd look like a true submerged dungeon if we didn't.

"What is Core 666's Black Armor doing?"

"It turned back in the middle floors. It looks like she wants to continue after meeting up with the other one."

"... Would it be a nuisance if they met up or would that be a good thing? I mean,

I could take care of them both in one go... Rokuko, what do you think?"

"It'd be a nuisance either way, right? At the least, Core 666 has [Summon Skeleton] after all."

Core 666, aren't you getting tired of using [Summon Skeleton] so much? I'm the same with [Summon Gargoyle] though, so it's not like I can say anything.

*

Well, I tried bashing the second Black Armor with [The Big Ball], but it challenged it head on and stopped it. They really are going with the brute force approach, its feet even cut grooves into the ground as it slid back.

Moreover, [The Big Ball] broke. That being the case, I can't reuse it...

However, it had a lot of scratches on its armor, so it looks like it finally took some damage.

"Hmm, it didn't come with any Skeletons, so it's probably getting information from Core 666. I was wary of that. That's why I let them learn that they can [Cope] with the iron ball by using it against them the same way again, then I'll hit them with it along with the water current in the upper floors."

"Well, there will be two of them, so it feels like they'll be able to deal with it..."

"So that means we need take care of one of them in the submerged area, right?"

If we can. If.

Now then, the two Black Armors came into the submerged area. The orichalcum wire has already been seen through, so they probably won't get caught by it.

"Rokuko, send out the Gargoyles and the octopus. Kill them if possible."

"Okay~, going!"

*

Team Demon King's Point of View

"Shall we go then?"

[Un.]

They walked into the submerged area.

Skeletons in the lead, they advanced slowly so that they could cope even if a water current suddenly sprung up.

The passageway was basically one way. It intersected with the direct route that had orichalcum threads strung up in it four times.

... There were several Gargoyles in the straight route's intersection. They couldn't see the thread easily, but it wouldn't allow them to advance.

The Gargoyles used magic despite being underwater. It's true that inanimate-types didn't have to breathe, but the kind of offensive magic that Gargoyles could use underwater was practically ineffective.

Water or fire, the surrounding water would just get in the way.

By process of elimination, they'd probably only be able to throw rocks at them. It'd do some damage to the Skeletons, but it wouldn't even be able to leave a scratch on the Living Armors made out of black steel.

"Should we just ignore them and keep going?"

[I'll go first, then.]

The Living Armor manipulated by Core 666's master went first.

The sound of rocks hitting them was noisy.

The first crossroad had the threads to the right—it looked like there was a pocket of air beyond it, but the Living Armor didn't need to breathe.

Circumventing the first orichalcum thread passage, they finally made their way to the place where the Gargoyles were earlier. It had been just a few steps away from them, but since they had to go all the way around to avoid the dungeon's trap, it was very troublesome.

The Gargoyles had gone further in, past the next orichalcum thread passage, and once again threw stones to hinder them. Rather than to hinder, it was more like they were just trying to annoy them.

Just then, a monster swimming through the water appeared.

[... An octopus?]

"What's this? It's the first time I've seen this monster... Jiji-sama, do you know?"

[Yes... I believe it's a monster called an Octopus... I don't know it well.]

Core 6 wasn't too informed about monsters in general. He paid even less attention to particularly weak monsters. He naturally wouldn't remember its

characteristics.

That's why he was a little surprised when it suddenly caused everything to go pitch black.

"Crap... I can't see at all in this."

[Watch out for attacks. Solidify your defenses.]

The stones kept hitting them, ringing as loud as ever. A few seconds later, they were able to see.

The octopus was gone, though.

"What were they trying to do?"

[I wonder? Well, it's alright. Let's continue.]

"! Wait!"

Ignoring the stones being thrown by the Gargoyles, the master's Living Armor walked forward.

[... Wha—!?]

They were underwater, but the armor collapsed under its own weight and—as is, its body fell into pieces. The Living Armor had died.

[I was killed...! Aidi, what happened!?]

"The floor, it rotated. You were killed."

When she'd confirmed it on the map, they'd rotated exactly ninety degrees. The Gargoyles attacking them from their left side moved perfectly in sync with the rotation, escaping as the Living Armor fell into pieces. There was no wire between the groups.

She hadn't made use of the Skeletons despite being able to keep summoning them as long as she had the magical power to. It was too late, but she regretted not having them go first.

[666. Calm down. Advance while paying careful attention to the map.]

"Understood, Jiji-sama... Master, I will punish you later."

When Core 666 tried to walk, this time, the water's flow fluctuated.

"—Skeletons!"

The skeletons linked together into a formation parallel to the flow of the

water to deal with it.

Immediately after that, an intense blast of water attacked them. It was hard for her to deal with because they were already underwater and couldn't see the water's timing.

[Wait, Aidi! The floo—!]

“! Cra—...”

She had forgotten about the spinning floor.

It was hard to deal with the current even at the best of times, so now that she was taking the brunt of it head on, the Living Armor's massive body lost its footing. The Skeletons were swept away by the water current and chopped into bits. The fragments of the Living Armor her master had been operating was chopped up as well.

She was flying towards the wires.

“—Haaaaaah!!”

Griiiiing!

Holding out her magic sword to act as a shield, she struck it against the orichalcum threads.

The magic sword didn't break. It endured.

“Aha! As expected of [Indestructible]! It didn't break!”

Verifying just how sturdy her magic sword was, she laughed happily.

[Hoh... you added it?]

“Yeah, it used a lot of the 500,000 DP, but it was worth it!”

Once she got used to the current, she escaped down her original route. She'd gotten into a tough spot, but she survived it.

Like that—Core 666 made it through the submerged area.

Chapter 186 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 9

I knew it. I knew that Core 666's Black Armor would be able to make it through.

But even so, when she got swept up by the water and went towards the orichalcum wires—

“Did I do it!?”

—I said it... I actually said that line... I need to be more careful next time.

“Kehma, almost, but not quite. It's okay, come here, now.”

“Why're you patting my head?”

“It just felt like Kehma was a bit depressed.”

“Ah, I was just hating myself for saying something that I believed that I would absolutely never say. Thanks for the thought, but Haku-san is watching, please stop.”

It felt like her super cold glare was asking, “Shall tomorrow's dinner be served alive?” I'm like a fish on a chopping board, hahaha.

“Ah, s-sorry, Haku Ane-sama. We're in a Dungeon Battle, so we have to concentrate, right!”

“Fufufu, that's a good Rokuko-chan. Could you pat me on the head later too?”

“Mou! Haku Ane-sama, please don't make fun of me!”

No, she's being serious. Not like I'd say that though.

Alright, back to the dungeon battle.

The remaining troops left to Team Demon King over in our dungeon is a single Black Armor and lots of Skeletons. Those Skeletons are probably from [Summon Skeleton].

But in Team Demon King's dungeon—

“Oi, Ichika. From how it was going a while ago, shouldn't you have already killed the boss?”

“U-uhh, yeah... but the door didn't open! I'm back to lookin' now.”

“There aren't any enemy reactions left in the room. I'm helping, too.”

With that, Ichika and Meat's responded to me in puzzlement. It looks like our exploration was stalled... No choice but to go back to looking huh?

"... There is also the possibility that there is a hidden passage on another floor."

"It could be some sort of door that can't be found without activating a trap. Don't forget to look over the ceilings as well... pitfall traps too."

Putting a passage inside a pitfall trap... maybe I should do that in our dungeon too? Haku-san's didn't say anything after telling us there is a correct route. No choice but to search ourselves, then.

"Fufu, this reminds me of the Dungeon Battle between Rokuko-chan and I."

"Eh? Aah, come to think of it... that's right, Haku Ane-sama."

"Should we start looking outside just in case...? Send a few Golems and use them."

"Yes, Goshujin-sama."

Fortunately, there isn't even a single enemy monster remaining. She can look for it freely.

Are they confident that we won't be able to find it even after looking for it, or are they amassing forces on an unexplored floor further inside?

Is there another possibility? Overlooking something would be bad...

"Rokuko, what do you think?"

"Mm, it's strange that the door didn't open even though there's no boss left in the boss room. Maybe we should check if it was really a boss room? It might've been a dummy one."

A dummy, huh. There's definitely the possibility of that. Haku-san brought it up a bit ago, but I also did it—that riddle door that didn't have anything after it... there's also the possibility that there's nothing after this boss room.

"Ichika, investigate that boss room for a little while, then look elsewhere."

"Got it."

As I finished issuing instructions on how to continue our attack—our exploration—I wondered how our defense was holding up.

When I checked, the Black Armor had just crossed the log bridge that had been jam packed with Gargoyles.

There was just a single Skeleton left. Its movements are rather good... maybe their master is operating it?

“Meat, please get back to defense when you finish exploring. Our defense is more urgent... Rokuko. Send Tentacle Slime-san out. Use it to settle Core 666 in the upper floors.”

“Will it be enough?—Wait, why’d you add [-san]!?”

“Well, because it’s Tentacle Slime-san.”

“... I don’t think that works as a reason though?”

It’s more or less this dungeon’s secret boss.

“Well then, use [The Big Ball] and flood them out. It’d be great if that’s enough to finish it, but...”

“Opening the flood gates and dropping [The Big Ball]~. Yay~, get squashed~!”

I knew they’d be fine stopping the iron ball with that scorching hot magic sword, so I combo’d it up with water.

The water flooded the space behind [The Big Ball] like it was blasting it toward Core 666.

I can’t help but get a bad feeling. Let’s gather everything in the room after this path...

Even if they stop the iron ball, they’ll be washed away by along with it by the water if they don’t stop it as well.

If they try to melt the iron ball, the water keep it cool.

Now, what’ll they do?

Reacting from the sound of it, Core 666 took the anti-water formation with the Skeletons.

Core 666 held up her magic sword, pointing it out towards the iron ball. Facing off against the large mass barreling towards her, she thrust towards it.

“—[Crimson Road].”

And said that.

In the next instant, both the iron ball and water disappeared in a straight line away from her. The Living Armor’s hand that held the magic sword was glowing red from the heat... was that a skill? A skill like that actually exists?

Core 666, wasn’t that a bit too hot?

“Wha—!? ... Uwaaah, whaaaat!?”

“Seriously? ... Isn’t that a bit unreasonable?”

The seawater coming up after that flowed past Core 666’s Black Armor. Its red hot hand turned back into black steel.

“[Crimson Road] is a piercing fire-type offensive skill. Although it has the disadvantage of only being able to be used once per day and dealing fire-type damage to the user, its power is considerable to compensate for that. Using it is daring.”

Hearing Haku-san’s explanation, it looks like it can’t be used again today. So that means if I had them eat another blast of [The Big Ball] and seawater, we could win. However—

“Kehma, we don’t have anymore of [The Big Ball]!”

“... Seriously? Then collect one of the ones we used and...”

“They were melted, smashed, and somehow erased. There aren’t any more.”

Geh, if I’d just prepared more...!

Unfortunately, I can’t just buy one directly with DP. According to Haku-san, they’re in her catalog as a trap, but they aren’t in ours. Is it because we don’t use normal traps? I usually just use handmade traps... grah, being stingy’s come back to bite me!

“Could we give DP to Haku Ane-sama and have her purchase it?”

“That’s, as expected, not allowed. It’d be different if it were for preparations, but it’s no good on the day of. After all, in the end, this is to train our juniors.”

In that case, is there anything I could summon to replace the iron ball trap...? An Iron Golem? No, that’s no good. They aren’t good at rolling! Aah, if Haku-san weren’t here I could just repair an iron ball with [Create Golem]!

“Well, we can think of this another way. With this, our opponent’s trump card is gone, so it’s like a fifty-fifty trade. We still have some troops and our trump card, so we still have an advantage!”

“Kehma, that might not have been their only trump card, so maybe it wasn’t an even trade after all?”

Rokuko gave a sound argument.

“... Yep, well, it’s alright. We’ll decide it in the next room.”

I spoke, still collecting everything in that one room.

Chapter 187 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle 10

Team Demon King's Point of View

Core 666 advanced through Team Sovereign's dungeon.

Although it was unfortunate that she ended up having to use her trump card, [Crimson Road], she didn't regret it. She would have been put in a pretty severe situation if she had to expose her body to the iron ball, after all.

[Aidi, they broke through the boss room.]

"Alright. But it's not like they'll find the Dummy Core."

[Yeah, they won't find it.]

Core 666's master responded in confidence. His voice reflected how confident he was that they wouldn't ever be able to find the Dummy Core.

"So, how's our dungeon?"

[As planned, they are stumped. After all, the Dummy Core isn't here.]

It was in the Black Armor. That was the Dummy Core's hiding spot. The Dummy Core was basketball-sized, but it fit perfectly in the Living Armor's abdomen.

The enemy's dungeon should be attacked with the strongest war potential. The Dummy Core, that which must be protected, should be protected with the strongest war potential.

So that she could follow both of these without contradicting either, Core 666 and her master thought of this plan.

They came up with the reckless strategy of [Place the Dummy Core inside of the strongest war potential].

This was also the strategy they'd planned to use since long before the Dungeon Battle.

That is why they had the rule be [Destroy the Dummy Core] rather than [Touch the Dummy Core]. That way, even if their enemy somehow managed to get inside of the armor, it wouldn't be counted as a defeat. It was a good

opportunity.

Their dungeon itself was made up of five floors that had cost them a fitting 50,000 DP. Most of their traps were prepared so that they would work by themselves even if the dungeon was suspended due to the core being outside of the dungeon. Their monsters were almost entirely gotten through [Summon Skeleton]. And finally, their final boss room was a facade.

They had to make a boss room midway and buy a bone fish so that they could dam up the water, but—well, it served its purpose of stalling for time.

The rest of their DP was used entirely for the sake of strengthening Core 666 herself.

“Fufufu, I don’t think Core 695 will figure out that the Dummy Core is right here.”

[It looks like they’re starting to look around outside the dungeon... Let’s just have them keep crawling around the dungeon until it’s all over.]

Core 666 advanced further inside.

There was a room ahead of her.

“Master, open it.”

[Yeah.]

Her master opened the door with the Skeleton he was operating.

A wiggling sound came from inside the room followed by a translucent tentacle appearing, wrapping around the Skeleton and seizing it.

[Uwaah!? Kuh, this thing—!]

Weaponless due to being summoned by [Summon Skeleton], it was equipped with what could at most be considered a bone club. It bashed the Tentacle Slimes tentacle with it—it didn’t deal any damage at all.

[Tch, I’ll switch to another Skeleton.]

“Master. Even if I can summon however many Skeletons needed with [Summon Skeleton], even my magical power will run out since we’re outside of the dungeon alright? Please fight properly.”

[That just now was justified.]

They knew that there was something waiting in ambush behind the door.

That's why she had a Skeleton open the door, so he wasn't wrong in saying that the cost was justified.

However, that was that. Core 666 smiled.

"It's added to your punishment. Please look forward to it."

[...]

"Oh? Not answering?"

[Hah... understood.]

"That's a good master. You are, in the end, my puppet."

Swinging the fire-clad magic sword, she burned the Tentacle Slime.

With a sound akin to evaporating water, the Tentacle Slime withdrew its tentacle... A slime's weakness is fire and magic. This magic sword hit both of those perfectly.

"Even so, they have an unusual slime, don't they? Is it a boss? What do you think, Jiji-sama?"

[The Tentacle Slime? Physical attacks don't work against it, so it's somewhat of a nuisance to deal with... but it's not as though you could say they don't have their weaknesses. It being a boss is possible. However, it would take a considerable amount of DP... did they bring it in themselves?]

"Oh, they brought it in? Did 695 want to enjoy the Dungeon Battle with me that much?"

When she stepped into the room—there were enough forces gathered together that it could practically be called an army. There were Golems, Gargoyles, even the Sahagins that she'd seen over in her dungeon and the octopus from a bit ago, as well as a Flying Squid and some others she didn't know. The Tentacle Slime was there as well, of course.

"... So many."

Core 666 muttered.

"What a wonderful welcome. But who shall be my dance partner for this party?"

[The last one standing?]

"Fufu, I'm getting fired up..."

Holding up her magic sword, Core 666 delved into the crowd of monsters.

*

Kehma's Point of View

"The boss room's door was a fake, huh?"

I just got Ichika's report.

"Yeah. Even though I'd finally got it open after breakin' it, there was just a dirt wall. It was just a normal door."

"Huh. There wasn't an [Under Construction] sticker too, was there?"

"[Under Construction] sticker? What's that?"

"Ah, it's nothing. It's a long story... so, there isn't a way forward then?"

"Un. I think we might've overlooked something', so I'm going over everythin' again."

"No, it's alright."

I stopped Ichika. I had Meat check outside the dungeon's entrance, but I was only really able to figure out the the dungeon was located somewhere in an area under the Demon King's rule.

... I'd started wondering what the heck we were supposed to do next, but I came to a conclusion straight away.

"Well, it's alright."

"Alright...? What do we do? We can't win if we can't beat Core 666's dungeon though."

"What're you saying, Rokuko?"

I clapped a hand onto Rokuko's shoulder and spoke.

"Isn't the enemy Dungeon Core in our dungeon already?"

"... Ah—"

Right, the Dummy Core could be anywhere. It could even be hidden and brought here.

If we defeat Core 666 who's invaded us, that'll be our win.

Either our enemy will lose all of their war potential and be unable to fight or we win because their core is destroyed. It's our win either way.

Un.

Core 666 is either super confident in herself or she's an idiot.
I'd be glad if it's the latter.

Chapter 188 - Third Dungeon Battle, Battle

11

“Rather... there is a high possibility that Core 666 has the Dummy Core.”
“... A mobile strategy?”

I don't know how she's carrying the Dummy Core. However, looking at what's going on in Team Demon King's dungeon, that's almost definitely what it is. There aren't any more traps or monsters appearing, nor are any of the walls or doors being repaired. It's basically like it's dead as a dungeon. Wouldn't it collapse if something happened? The suspense is real.

“Yeah. For example, let's assume that Core 666 is inside that Black Armor and that she's about as tall as Meat. If that's the case, couldn't they put it inside it somewhere?”
“I see.”

The size of a Dummy Core is the same as the Dungeon Core. That is, the size of a large basketball. By the way, I'm told that Haku-san's cores are a ton larger, so there are differences between them.

... The size of the armor's head is a bit too small, so if we assume that Core 666's true body isn't tiny, it's probably somewhere in the torso. Perhaps, if it's a liquid or gas, Core 666's body is simply filling the inside of the armor. My prediction is that Core 666's body is a big Black Armor Living Armor that's one size larger and is being worn on the outside, or at least it's probable. Like a certain superhero's Over Body.

Still though, is it okay for the Dummy Core to not be inside of their dungeon? There's nothing I can say about it though, the referee, [Father], isn't saying anything about it.

The concept itself isn't bad. If Core 666 is a peerless warrior able to repel any adversity, it's a superb move. If she could keep using no risk no cost techniques like that unreasonable

[Crimson Road], she'd be unbeatable. It'd turn into a one-sided stompfest. However, the reality is that she's now slugging it out with the monster group and is rampaging among them. It doesn't look like she's tired, but it also doesn't look like she's strong enough to be considered unbeatable.

"Even if she could do something like take the core out of the dungeon... Haku Ane-sama, there would be demerits to it right? What kind of demerits would there be?"

"That's a good question, as expected of my Rokuko-chan! Yes, first of all, depending on the situation, the dungeon would collapse. However, Team Demon King's dungeon has a structure such that it wouldn't collapse even without a core. There are many walls and small rooms, as well as large areas between each of their floors. Even if a dungeon like this had its core destroyed, it would retain its shape. Even so, without its core, even with it retaining its shape, it would no longer be a dungeon. The core would have to start over entirely if brought to it."

In other words, it would collapse because it doesn't have a core, and even if it didn't, it wouldn't be considered a dungeon anymore and the dungeon's domain would have to be built up all over again. With it requiring 5,000 DP for assigning a single floor, that's a pretty big disadvantage.

Haku-san continued talking.

"As it would no longer be a dungeon, you would be unable to send out new traps and monsters. Most of the existing traps would be unable to activate... and although the monsters wouldn't immediately disappear, as an exception, monsters from [Monster Spawners] would quickly die. Those monsters are made such that they are unable to live without being inside of a dungeon."

The magical power filling the inside of a dungeon is a kind of food for monsters. It's no wonder why they'd die without their food. Conversely, if proper ecosystems were established, they could revert to normal monsters and become wild.

She said she's seen several examples of it happening... as expected of Haku-san, a person who has destroyed several Dungeon Cores.

"What about monsters summoned through summon-type magic?"

"Those move using the magical power of the person who summoned them, so

they are unrelated to dungeons. That is, unless they were summoned by a dungeon monster.”

Summon-types disappear when the summoner disappears, and creation-types stay behind with the orders they were given.

Thinking about what happens after the Dungeon Core is destroyed, creation-types are excellent, but even so, that’s given the assumption that the person would be dead, so for Haku-san, that bonus doesn’t matter to her evaluations. For example, the inn would continue on even after I die, but I wouldn’t be there. It could only be used as something to give as an asset to descendants.

[Heeh, so that’s what happens? Good job, 89. I didn’t know~]

“Oh? I thought for certain that Otou-sama would know though?”

[Well, it’s not like I’m watching over everything yeah? Particularly what happens to dungeons after they’ve lost their cores.]

“Well! I am extremely honored to have been of use, Otou-sama.”

—Ummm, I wound up listening to Haku-san’s story for quite a while there, but I don’t care about stuff like that right now.

The most important thing right now is destroying that Core 666... err, accidentally destroying her... err, defeating her. Pretenses are important. It’ll definitely just be an unfortunate accident that happened in this Dungeon Battle because I was striving to beat her.

Let’s check out the situation.

When I looked at the map, for enemies, there was just a single Living Armor left in the Monster House I prepared.

As for the Skeletons that had been surrounding it, they were long since annihilated. Tentacle Slime-san had turned them all into bone meal. After all, even with him being able to operate them well, that Zack couldn’t do anything against the physical annulment with Skeletons.

However, Core 666 is holding a fire magic sword. It had taken a lot of hits from Core 666 while it was dealing with the Skeletons, so many of its tentacles were severed and it was covered with wounds.

“Alright, Tentacle Slime-san... eh, that’s a bit long, Ten-san should be good. Ten-san, that Black Armor is using a fire magic sword so pull back for now and recover.”

Ah, crap. I just named it, didn't I? When I looked to make sure, [Ten] was registered on the named monster list. Tehee. Well, adding one more after all this time should be alright. It's been the most active one after all.

Ten-san drew back to recover its viscous mass that had been damaged by Core 666. The Ten-san juices we stocked up on to recover it with were effective. Just pushing them into the slime's body was even more effective than using a potion.

Gargoyles continued attacking with magic to plug up the hole left over from Ten-san's withdrawal.

They were using [Stone Bolt], carpet bombing her and leaving no gaps. The stone projectiles are banging against the Black Armor... but it's not doing anything! She's way too hard!

This is bad. The hole left by Ten-san is too big.

I gave directions to the Sahagin Corps. Then, I took out iron chains with weights at the ends. A few—no, dozens of them. I bought them with DP a bit ago.

If we can't beat her, we'll restrain her. Yep. Although their quality is overwhelmingly better, we win in numbers. In that case, I will absolutely make use of it.

They could be cut through with iron, but there's so many that [that fire magic sword can't cut through them all].

And so, the Sahagins all threw their weighted chains simultaneously. Several of them were repelled, but being unable to handle the sheer number of chains coming at it, the Black Armor was unable to move after being caught by them... good, we've sealed its movements!

Now we just need to finish it off...

... Just as I thought that—

“Kehma! Not yet!”

The Black Armor, unable to move, collapsed.
—Standing out against her surroundings, a pretty girl with red hair appeared.

Chapter 189 - Third Dungeon Battle:

Conclusion

The small, red-haired girl had obviously been inside the armor. This was Core 666 after using humanization.

“Core 666 detached!”

“Detached... she could do that?”

Her red hair was like fresh blood, her red eyes like blazing fire. As if to announce that the armor was inelegant, she was an Ojou-sama that wore a red-based dress with white frills. Even her appearance matched her attribute.

Looking like it grew from her hand, Core 666 took out her fire magic sword and swung it down towards the captured Black Armor, slicing off the chains that held it down... it looks like she went a bit too far, though, as there was a gash on the Black Armor now.

Its freedom regained, the Black Armor clenched its fists and stood back-to-back with Core 666.

The Sahagins launched more chains at them, but this time the two of them somehow managed to cope and avoid them.

—Its movements are different from just a moment ago. Is her master operating it now?

Still though, did Core 666 come out from inside the armor and humanize?

—No, that’s not it. That magic sword. It looked like it grew from her hand, but was it actually like that? In other words, is it that her body is part of the magic sword—

... [Magic Sword]... when Core 666 isn’t using humanization, is that her true appearance?

“Haku-san. Magic swords... could they be monsters?”

“Oh? You didn’t know? Among the world’s magic swords, seventy percent are monsters.”

I just discovered a jarring fact.

Seventy percent. Seventy percent of magic swords aren't items, but monsters. Well, there's stuff like Living Armors, so it's not that weird that there's also Living Weapons. Just, for it to still be called a magic sword...
... Ah, come to think of it, our magic swords are Golems, huh.
In that case, to make a magic sword—

“Kehma, what should we do!? How can we win!?”
“Whoops, I was lost in thought there... Well, how about we deal with the Black Armor first? Golem Corps!”

I gave the orichalcum wire to the Golem Corps.
It's what used to be in the submerged area. I had them collect it and bring it there.
There were handles at the ends of them to make them convenient to carry, so there's no problems for them throwing it all.

“Take this!”
Having weights attached to their ends, I had them mixed in with the large number of chains and all thrown at once.

*

Team Demon King's Point of View

“Fufu, a place like this won't be my end!”
Separating from the bound Living Armor she was operating, Core 666 let go of the magic sword (herself).
Then, humanizing from a magic sword, she grasped onto a sword with the same ability as the magic sword that was her true appearance by using a skill named [Doppelganger], she cut off the chains that were restricting the Black Armor. [Doppelganger] was like an alter ego, but if the [Doppelganger] sword was broken, she would die as well. It was that sort of skill.

“There's no time to summon Skeletons. I'll leave the armor's operation to master, let's deal with it all ourselves.”
[Got it.]

Leaving the Black Armor that still had the Dummy Core in its abdomen to her master, she cleared away the chains assailing them with her flame-clad magic

sword. Her master also manipulated the Black Armor, continuing to brush away the chains with its empty hands. It was too much for a single person to handle, but they could manage with the two of them. Every direction was covered.

“If it’s like this, we can do it.”

[Yeah.]

Chains continued to be thrown at them. Once again, Core 666 used her magic sword and her master used the armor’s hands to clear them—

Shlink!

—However, trying to brush them away, both of the Black Armor’s arms and its neck was severed.

[Huh?]

Something with an extreme sharpness was mixed into the chains, a few passing barely centimeters above Core 666’s head.

With a bang, two heavy iron weights hit the ground. A super fine wire stretched between the weights, pulled taut. It was able to withstand the force of being pulled both despite being such a thin wire. This is what cut through the Black Armor just before, it was the same orichalcum thread as before.

[Is it the same thing as a bit ago...? It’s way too sharp.]

“Oh? Master, look at what you’ve done to my armor...”

[Sorry.]

“... Well, perhaps I should have expected this to happen after allowing you to use it? I can’t leave my back to you anymore... You legs look fine, though. Master, just run around. It will be a little harder, but it should be alright if you pay careful attention to where you’re running.”

The Living Armor wouldn’t die from something like this. However, the chains and well as that super sharp orichalcum thread was thrown at them once again. Dashing between them, Core 666 intercepted the orichalcum thread with her [Indestructible] magic sword. It fell to the ground... she’d have to be careful so as to not sever her feet.

“Those weights at the ends of the wires will serve as a mark for where they are. The armor doesn’t have [Indestructible], so make sure to avoid it.”

[Yeah. Aidi, you be careful too. Only your sword has [Indestructible] after all.]

They separated from each other. If they ran in different directions, their enemies would have to attack multiple spots.

The Tentacle Slime used the moment they separated as a chance to come back in. It appeared to target the Black Armor that couldn't use magic to attack. Conversely, Core 666 aimed at it.

Another set of weights flew towards each of them. Core 666 didn't bother evading, relying on her sword to block it.

The Black Armor avoided it by moving far to the side. However, its body was sliced in two through the middle.

“Eh—”

[Huh—?]

The orichalcum string that was caught by her magic sword fell to the ground. The Black Armor's upper body slammed onto the ground with a bang, its lower half collapsing to its knees.

They didn't know what happened. The Black Armor should have avoided the string. Yet here it was, cut in two.

As expected, even the Living Armor would die after being cut in two through the center of the torso, the largest part of its body.

The Dummy Core that had been hiding inside of its upper body had already dropped to the ground. Fortunately, it looked to still be intact... however, as they were deep inside enemy territory and it was without the protection of the Black Armor, their defeat condition was both exposed and unprotected. What would the outcome of that be?

It was as clear as day.

Even though Core 666 tried dashing over to it, the Tentacle Slime blocked her way.

She tried attacking it over and over with her magic sword, but the liquid-filled slime wouldn't be defeated so easily. Moreover, since the Tentacle Slime was able to use more than two tentacles simultaneously, it was more than capable of attacking while blocking the sword.

The Dummy Core was picked up by a Golem, and before Core 666 noticed—

—Broke it.

Chapter 190 - Victor's Delight

The Living Armor being able to move despite having no head was within my expectations.

Because of that, I didn't hesitate and attacked mercilessly. We won't stop attacking until it's completely stopped moving.

However, the orichalcum wires had weights attached to both ends, so we can't hide it.

Therefore, by using decoy weights, I tried having them fall into a situation where they thought that they'd avoided the wires.

To be specific, the final orichalcum wire that the Black Armor dodged was a [Half Set] that the Sahagins concealed by holding the weights directly. There was nothing between the weights, so they had to avoid getting found out.

There may have been a sense of something being wrong like the surrounding monsters' movements being off or their speed being too slow or maybe something else, but it'd be absurd to think that they'd both realize and perfectly cope with it their first time seeing it. It's the so-called death by ignorance. I mean, they should've at least dodged up or down.

I read about this a while back in a manga. In the middle of the night, there were [two] cars with a single headlight on each rushing towards a victim. If the victim avoided it thinking that there was only [one] car, he would've been run over by the second car. The manga's protagonist, a master sniper, realized that there were two engine sounds though.

Well, we were able to get to the Dummy Core after destroying the Black Armor, so we didn't need to go out of the way and purposely kill Core 666. As expected, it was in the armor.

[Looks like the game's over. Congratulations, Team Sovereign! It's your victory!]

[Father] spoke. Looks like we really won. I was a bit doubtful about it since the last bit went so fast, but it definitely happened since the judgement call came out.

Core 666 was wrapped in light and disappeared. [Father] probably returned her.
... Oi, is it alright to leave the leftover bits of that armor here?

“We did it, Kehma! We won! Yaaaay!”

Rokuko shouted out, cheering while bouncing up and down in delight. Are you a kid?

“I get that you’re happy, so calm down a bit.”

“Fu fufufu fu fu fu, this is my win as well as Haku Ane-sama’s! Double the happiness! There’s no way I could calm down!”

“Then just calm down twice.”

I just stopped her bouncing by holding my hand against the top of her head for now.

I mean, I could see what was under her skirt. It was immodest. Even though I have a foot fetish, that doesn’t mean I dislike other things. Thighs and butts are good too.

“Meat, Ichika, good work to you two as well.”

“That was tiring...”

“I’ll be expectin’ a suitable bonus~”

After operating the Golems and sending detailed instructions to the Sahagins and Gargoyles, the two girls were on the ground, exhausted.

Once our victory was determined, Haku-san smiled.

“That went smoothly now, didn’t it, Kehma-san? I thought you would give 666 the finishing blow for certain, though.”

“Hahaha, I wasn’t something we needed to do to win after all.”

Would I really be a Hero after destroying a Dungeon Core? I was worried about what would’ve happened to me, who was also a Dungeon Master, but I mainly didn’t want to increase my troubles by purposely killing a core belonging to the Demon King faction. In the first place, it’d be an indirect destruction through using a monster, so it wouldn’t have done anything.

... No, something still might happen after I go to sleep and wake up. I can’t relax yet!

A communication came from Team Demon King.

When I approved it and connected, a monitor that looked like a full size mirror showing Core 666 appeared in the air. She's wearing that same red dress from when she disappeared from the dungeon a bit ago.

[I lost.]

"I won. Fufu."

Rokuko threw out her chest in pride.

Seeing that, Core 666 smiled in delight.

[695. Let's have a one-on-one duel next time.]

"No way, I'm quitting while I'm ahead!"

[Oh? How lonely. Even though we finally became rivals (best friends) through this Dungeon Battle...]

"Best friends? B-best friends?"

[Yeah. Rivals (best friends). Weren't we already friends? And now we had this mock battle (played together). How about we not hold ourselves back with each other like Jiji-sama and 89-sama?]

"U-umm, I'm happy that we're friends... but aren't there some strange nuances there?"

Oi, Rokuko, are you sure? This friend of yours is the battle junkie-type that'd cut you from behind with a smile on her face.

My eyes met with Core 666's through the monitor... at least I think she's looking at me? Well, it's probably being transmitted?

[Are you my rival's (best friend's) master?]

"Yeah. I'm Rokuko's master."

[Really. 695, your master calls you Rokuko... Could I do the same? We are friends, after all.]

"Oh? Sure! We're friends after all!"

[Fufu, thank you, Rokuko. You can call me Aidi then, it is what my master uses for me. Ah, Rokuko's Master-san, you can use that too, alright? It's easier for humans to refer to us like that.]

As she said that, Core 666—Aidi, turned towards me.

[Are that dungeon's gimmicks due to you?]

"... .. No, they are due to Haku-san... Senior Core's training."

[Hoh, so you did make them. As expected, it seems that the cause of Rokuko's rapid growth is due to her master.]

I tried to trick her through a bit of deception, but it looks like she caught me.

[Let's do this again sometime.]

"Please spare me that."

[It was practically a one-on-one this time as well, but we'll not let that trash join in next time.]

"Did you not hear my refusal? Is your hearing bad...?"

[You're looking for a weak point to attack me with next time? So you'll be attacking my ears... I can't wait.]

Uwaaah, she's not understanding me. So troublesome...

[Even so, it's vexing that I was so close to the end.]

"Hmm?"

[The core room was just after that room filled with those monsters, right?]

"I don't think we would've lost even if you made your way through that room."

[Heeh... I wonder what that means? Was there still a way to go? It seemed to me that you'd placed all of your forces there for a decisive battle though?]

... She's pretty sharp. In truth, there had only been a core room passed it.

"I'm fine with answering that, but I'd like to asked a question instead. How did that sword stop the orichalcum? Is it made of good materials?"

[Hmph. Alright. Even though I'm the one to say it, it's just made of ordinary magic iron. I gave the magic sword the [Indestructible] ability to deal with the orichalcum—though with you asking that, could it be that human-type cores don't have the [Enhancement] option in the menu?]

Enhancement... was there something like that? Have I not unlocked it? Or maybe it doesn't exist for us in the first place?

[At the least, magic sword-type cores have [Enhancement] entries that they can use to strengthen themselves by using DP. I used almost all of this Dungeon Battle's DP to purchase [Indestructible]—ah, that should be enough of a reward (service) to the victor? Now for you to answer my question.]

"Ah, sure... I never thought that we'd both have the same idea."

[Same idea?]

“Yeah, our core was also mobile. It was moving about in our dungeon though.”

I attached it to the ammonite’s shell and had it always dart about underwater. In truth, particularly when Core 666 entered the Monster House, I had it go outside of the dungeon (but still inside of the domain) through a flood room and hide near lower levels.

[... I see. So you had that sort of strategy.]

“However, even though moving your Dummy Core around is fine... you’re a fool.”

[? I thought it was a good idea though? You seem to have been using it as well, so aren’t you a fool then?]

“Wherever the Dungeon Core was, wouldn’t it have been our win by defeating you? Isn’t that all pointless if you come to our dungeon like that?”

[... Huh!?!]

[Well, you had [Indestructible]... It would’ve been fine enduring whatever in your magic sword form when push came to shove... at worst, you would’ve been restrained until the end of the Dungeon Battle—I told you that before the Dungeon Battle, remember?]

[Ah, right.]

I saw a boy with dark red hair behind Aidi. If Aidi’s were like fresh blood, his was more like blood that had darkened after sitting for a while... is that her master? If he’s human, he’s even younger than me.

“Are you her master? ... A human?”

[Yeah. You too? This is my first time seeing a human master... Given your appearance, you’re from another world?]

Come to think of it, I’m in my jersey. Did I just give them extra intel?

“Yeah, this is my world’s pajamas.”

[Pajamas...? Wearing pajamas for a Dungeon Battle... what a strange person.]

“Umu. They’re easy to relax in. Isn’t it important to be relaxed during a challenge?”

[... Well, whatever. It won’t matter next time... I’ll cut it.]

“Ye—”

When I tried to say something like ‘Yeah, see you next time~’, their master

swung the sword that was hanging at his waist. The mirror-like monitor disappeared with a shattering sound... I guess that was him 'cutting it'?

Even though I was wanting to talk a bit more with a fellow human master... Ah, but I guess I gave killing him in that Dungeon Battle a bit of thought, didn't I? I mean, killing the Dungeon Core is the same as killing the Dungeon Master. Well, it's all good. With this much, we're acquaintances now. In this world, that amount of blood lust is normal. Normal, I say.

"Ah, wait, Kehma. Can I talk with Team Dragon King?"

"Hmm? You have something you want to talk with them about?"

"Just a bit."

"Sure then, go ahead."

I didn't really have a reason to refuse her, so I gave her my permission. The mirror appeared once again, so it looks like they approved it. Ah, that's a huge snake. There's even a slug and a frog standing next to it.

[What!? 695, come to gloat!?!]

"Hey hey, how do you feel? Hey, how do you feel? You always, always made fun of me, but now it's all my win, ah, and it's your complete defeat! So, how do you feel now? There are three of you, but you couldn't do anything, are you frustrated? You all going to cry? Hey, hey! Say something!"

[Hey, you really came to gloat!?!]

"Obviously! I, the winner, am great, and you are all stupid! Bye!"

[Ah, oi, don't run awa—]

Vwoom.

The monitor disappeared just like how an old TV would turn off.

I guess I was wrong earlier about him saying he was going to turn it off?

"... Phew... that was refreshing!"

"Y-yeah. Good job."

"This was all thanks to Kehma! Thank you, Kehma!"

Rokuko smiled in such a way that it looked like a major weight was lifted from her, a true smile.

I couldn't say anything in response to her, so I just patted her head.

[Well then, once again, congratulations 89, 695. Now for the reward.]

A communication from [Father] appeared... Is it here?
Reward time, that is.

Chapter 191 - Rewards

[Well then, it's reward time~]

Yeah, I heard you a second ago.

[First of all is the extra prize. As a reward for doing your best, this is concerning your names. Haku Raverio, Rokuko Dungeon Core. I officially recognize these names to the limits of my authority.]

"Ah! Really, Otou-sama!?"

"Amazing, the name I got from Kehma was officially recognized!"

I don't really understand what's so good about it, but the two Dungeon Cores were overjoyed.

Rather, Rokuko's surname is Dungeon Core... ah, right, come to think of it, I called her with that name a while back huh?

"Rokuko, you're Haku-san's younger sister, so wouldn't Rokuko Raverio be better?"

"Huh? Really?"

"Besides, if you said your name was Dungeon Core your identity would be exposed immediately... so, would it be alright to adjust it?"

[Hmm, I think using [Dungeon Core] as a common family name for my children is good though. Well... un, as Kehma-kun wishes, let's adjust it. 695, would you like to receive Kehma-kun's family name and become Rokuko Masuda?]

Why's it my family name now!?

When I looked at Rokuko, her face was beat red. Is she feeling sick? I placed my hands to her cheeks to check.

Why's your face loosening? Oi.

A grin on his face, [Father] kept talking.

[I'm not good at thinking up new names. That's why numbers are an amazing invention, you only have to increase the count.]

"I think her having the same 'Raverio' as Haku-san would be good though..."

[Haku has 'Raverio' because she married Lyon-kun though? Wouldn't it then be natural for Rokuko, who is Kehma-kun's partner, to introduce herself with the

same family name as you?]

“Tou-sama, i-in other words, y-you mean... K-Kehma and I... married!?”

I glanced toward Haku-san... Hmm? What’s that gesture...? Her thumb moved along her neck, stabbing downward at the end... ah, right. [Die].

“Wait, Rokuko. I’d like to keep our relationship pure for now.”

“? A pure relationship? Are there impure relationships? Kehma’s here so it being a bit dirty’s alright!”

Rokuko smiled tenderly.

The sudden turn made my chest throb.

“Right, Goshujin-sama’s [Cleanup] is special.”

“See! Meat gets it! Kehma can shoo away any filth in one shot!”

Rokuko completely affirmed Meat’s statement.

Ah, so that’s what she meant. I’m a bit relieved.

Aah, I must have arrhythmia. Super arrhythmia~, I should lie down~. I must be worn out from being so busy with stuff for the Dungeon Battle~.

“Umm, rather than suddenly getting married, how about making a pun off of dungeons... ‘labyrinth’—a word that means labyrinth in my world’s language. How about we twist that further into a family name of ‘Labriheart’? Ah, ‘heart’ means heart.”

[A labyrinth’s heart huh? Sounds good. Would you mind allowing me to use that for my children’s common family name?]

“I don’t mind.”

[Alright, then it’ll be Haku Raverio and Rokuko Labriheart. Under my authority, I again officially recognize these two names. Also, I allow my children to freely use Labriheart for their family name.]

Somehow, this [Father] really did find thinking up [New Names] to be troublesome. He adopted it at the drop of a hat.

[... However, Kehma-kun. I heard that presenting a ring to someone is meaningful where you come from? Why would it be [Suddenly] after so long since that?]

“Mmm, that was just the extra prize, don’t you still have prizes to give?”

[Oh, right. Well then, two for both Haku and Rokuko.]

Good. I dodged the bullet.

[For Haku, a magic sword I made. As well as... ah, I guess it'd be better to keep it a secret from Kehma-kun and them? I'll send you the other one later.]

“Thank you for your consideration, Otou-sama. I accept your gift gratefully.”

... A magic sword made by [Father] huh. Wouldn't that be a magic sword strong enough to wreck the planet? Also, what's with that secret prize? I want to know what it is...

[For Rokuko... Yep. I'll give you one of the godly beddings, a godly comforter. Ah, Kehma-kun, remember that this is for Rokuko.]

Seriously? Godly beddings. Moreover, that 'one of'... So that means there are other kinds?

... Now I have to collect them all.

[Make sure to read the instructions before using it, there are various things you'll need to know. The next prize is for Kehma-kun. I give you this.]

Bang.

A white gem about as big as a basketball fell down in front of me.

“A Dummy Core?”

[No. Although it isn't numbered and has nothing inside it, it is a genuine core. Go ahead and break it.]

... Huh?

[You're a Hero while also being a Dungeon Master, didn't you want to see what'd happen if you destroyed a core? Ah, do you need a weapon?]

... Ah, of course I'd be found out. Of cooourse~

With another bang, a sword fell down in front of me while I was thinking.

It was a plain sword that lacked any decoration, a sword made entirely of metal, even its hilt.

Yeah. It's just a simple sword made fully out of metal. It's just that that 'metal' was orichalcum.

Bargain bin orichalcum! How many ingots did it take to make this thing?

[That's a freebie. I'm feeling pretty good today, so have fun with that. It's not

a magic sword or anything so don't worry yeah? It's just normal orichalcum shaped into a sword. Use it however you want.]

"Could I melt it down into wires?"

[Sure. Do whatever with it.]

Looks like me being able to process it however I want with [Create Golem] was exposed too.

I held the orichalcum sword... yep, it's lighter than it looks. It's one of orichalcum's characteristics. After going this far, there's no way I couldn't destroy the Dungeon Core that was shining white just in front of me.

I swung at the mysterious Dungeon Core with the orichalcum sword.

The response was lighter than I'd expected. So sharp!

The Dungeon Core was sliced in half from my simple slash. I felt a warm wind break out from the cracked core.

[So, feel anything? You get a skill?]

"No, I don't really feel any—ah."

I felt something like electricity run down my spine. This is it. It's similar to the sensation from when you use a skill scroll. Information planted itself directly in my brain.

Aah, yep, there it is. I'm learning something. It's like it's telling me to not open another application during the installation—that sort of feeling.

I stopped moving for a while and waited for it to finish.

Once the installation finished, I heard a mechanical voice that felt like I'd heard it somewhere before echo in my head.

[[Super Transformation Lv 3] has been acquired.]

... And it suddenly went to Lv 3 for some reason, the heck?

Chapter 192 - Super Transformation

I wanted an explanation for why it suddenly went to Lv 3, but the only thing I knew was how to use the [Super Transformation Lv 3] that had been planted into my brain.

Its effects are as follows:

- Can transform into what is imagined Lv X times per day (3 times for Lv 3)
- Lv 1 Effect: Can transform into something that exists
- Lv 2 Effect: Can partially mimic the abilities of what has been transformed into
- Lv 3 Effect: Once every 72 hours, even if you die, the transformation will cancel and you will revive

Magical power is consumed during the transformation. I can either turn it off when I want, or when my magical power depletes.

The amount of magical power consumed seems to be quite huge if I turn into something that's really different in appearance. And my abilities would be limited in the transformation.

I don't know what the Lv 4 effect would be, but the ones I already have are crazy. I can transform into something so long as it exists huh? As expected of a Cheat Skill. And I can revive once every three days too... Well, depending on the situation, it could just be an instant death after reviving.

Like if I was in lava or something.

[Was that the [Announcement] just now? It gave the same feeling as our [Menu].]

"Eh, could everyone hear that just now?"

[No, I was just able to observe it a little there. So, what kind of skill did you get?]

I was troubled over whether or not I should tell him or if I should keep it as a trump card. At any rate, I guess it's fine to tell him its name?

I think it'd be better if I didn't say it since Haku-san's here as well, but it's [Father]'s request. It feels like it'd turn into a problem if I didn't answer him. He

said that I was a Hero right in front of Haku-san, so that was exposed already. It might make it seem like I'm planning on rebelling or something if I don't answer...

Alright, let's answer.

"I got that freebie from you, so I'll tell you the skill's name. It's [Super Transformation]."

[[Super Transformation] huh? You got a pretty interesting skill.]

Hmm? Doesn't it feel like he knows what it does?

[In the past, someone even got up to [Super Transformation Lv 7] if I recall? Perfectly copying the enemy's shape and abilities, they were able to use their opponent's abilities along with their own. It got pretty amazing.]

The heck? Wouldn't that be invincible?

"Oh? I think I dealt with that person by sending five hundred against them?"
[Yeah, Haku played a big role in it back then.]

Ah, so they were defeated by numbers huh. Right, it's not like I could give it out to others or anything.

... Ah, there does appear to be skills that can be shared with others though.

"So Kehma-san was a God's Vanguard...? I knew that he was a person from another world, but still..."

"Well, I'm just an everyday Hero that doesn't intend to destroy dungeons or anything like that. I haven't even had a Cheat Skill until now. I don't even think of myself as a God's Vanguard."

"Hmm. In that case, it's alright—so, that skill, would you please tell me more about it in detail? You will, won't you? To be exact, show be an example of you transforming."

Okay~, order received~.

"The number of times that I can transform is limited, so I can't keep doing it forever... What do you want me to transform to?"

"Let's see... can you transform into Rokuko-can?"

... Can I? Let's give it a shot.

I pictured Rokuko in my mind and said [Super Transformation]. I can activate

the skill without saying it, but it's probably better for me to say something given where I am.

Uoh, my field of view dropped... Oh, so this is Rokuko's eye level.

"Ooh, he really looks the same as me!"

"So I look like Rokuko now? I'm still wearing my jersey, so it looks like it doesn't affect clothing... Ah, my voice changed too."

The clothes I've been wearing are too big for me now. Oi.

"You know that you shouldn't look under those clothes, right? Right!?"

"... I wasn't thinking about it at all."

"You know that I'll hit you if you touch your body, right?"

"Well, I'm just curious about whether or not it can reproduce places I've never seen before. Rokuko, do you have any scratches or something that I don't know about?"

"Nope. I don't have any scratches or stuff like that that Kehma doesn't know about."

"Ah—I was surprised since there's another Rokuko-chan, but wait! I can't ignore that statement!"

That's a false accusation though.

I undid the transformation.

"... I make sure to take care of Rokuko so that she doesn't get even a single scratch. You could even use lie detection magic or magic tool if you like."

"Are you telling the truth?"

"I am."

"... It appears that you really are telling the truth."

Oh. It looks like she really did invoke some lie detecting magic. But it's a good thing that people can prove their innocence so quickly with stuff like that. They just have to actually be innocent.

"I'll take this chance ask you. You have no intention of bringing harm to Rokuko-chan, correct?"

"Correct! I swear to god."

[Ahahaha! Swearing to god right in front of me! Good, good!]

[Father] suddenly broke into laughter.

Ah, right. God is the one that sends the Heroes. He's the enemy. Rather, wasn't there also the theory that [Father] is also a god? At any rate, [Father] is laughing pretty hard.

"Understood... By the way, could you transform into Rokuko-chan one more time? I'd like to hear two Rokuko-chans say, 'I love Onee-sama'."

"Ah, sorry, but I have a limited number of transformations, so maybe next time."

"Oh? That's unfortunate... Then, could you turn into this envelope? If you can, what's inside of it."

Haku-san showed me an envelope... Hohoh, this will easily verify a few things. First, can I transform into inanimate objects?

Second, can I transform into something that I haven't seen directly and don't already know?

Third, can I reproduce the contents of the letter?

... As expected of Haku-san. Being able to get all of that from a single transformation.

Well, alright. Thinking about the insides of the envelope, I used [Super Transformation].

"... [Super Transformation]."

My body transformed easily... Hmm, somehow, it looks like I just turned into the envelope. As expected, picturing something that I don't know about in my head isn't enough to use to transform.

I fell to the floor. Seeing the Master Room like this is kind of new... Ah, Haku-san walked closer. I saw white under her skirt. Even the knee socks in her long skirt is nice... ah. She picked me up. Maybe she's trying to take a closer look?

"Hoh. It even reproduced the destination address that I didn't show you. However, it looks like the contents of the envelope weren't reproduced? Maybe what's necessary is seeing it directly... Maybe I should try tearing it a little? I'm curious about how much damage there will be when he switched back."

Higii!? Stop!? Ah, I can't talk. Hey, don't rip me! Seriously, doooooon't! I'd revive even if I die with the Lv 3 effect but really, stooop!

With a pop, I released the transformation and turned back into a human. In

Haku-san's hands.

“Kyah! Please don't turn back so suddenly, Kehma-san—oh?”

“Uoooh! ... Phew, I'm back. Man, that was close. Thought I was going to die...”

“Kehma!? C-clothes, put on clothes—!”

Eh?

I saw my clothes.

They were on the floor.

... Aah, so that's it. When I turned into an envelope, my clothes simple fell to the ground.

In other words, I'm being held princess-style by Haku-san... in the nude.

“Kyaaaa—!? Haku-san's a pervert—!!”

“That's rude. Calling someone a pervert... If anything, Kehma-san is the pervert. You're naked, after all.”

“You're too calm! Scary!”

“I'm used to seeing adventurer corpses in the nude. It's alright, it's cute.”

Stop it! That manner of talking is wounding me!

“Ah, but Rokuko-chan shouldn't look at something so foul, alright?”

“Eh? Y-yesh! Sorry, Haku Ane-sama! I-I didn't see anything, Kehma! Don't worry!”

“Y-yeah...”

... With that, I put my clothes back on with slightly teary eyes.

Furthermore, [Father] laughed so hard he had to hold his sides.

Sniff

I can't take anymore...

Chapter 193 - Third Dungeon Battle: End

[That might've been the first time I've laughed so hard. As I thought, Kehma-kun is the best when it comes to being amusing. Ah, don't worry, you haven't been connected with the other teams since I started giving out your rewards.]

"Hahaha, at least there's that. My dignity as a man... seriously..."

I was able to take advantage of the situation to turn the topic away from skills. The result should've made it OK... but just remembering it makes me want to cry.

A lot of stuff was exposed, but I was able to confirm some worthwhile things through Haku-san's investigation. I'll verify it again myself when I return.

"Come to think of it, Kehma-san. Do you want the S-Rank adventurer title as a Hero?"

"... No."

"Heroes are normally forced into being S-Rank though?"

"Haku-san, wouldn't a Hero always staying at [Cave of Desires] bring too much attention?"

"Oh? I don't mind much either way. It wouldn't change much at this point. Rather, couldn't you use it as a deterrent against unnecessary problems?"

... That really does sound like an attractive proposal. However, it would also come with the responsibilities of being a Hero.

"Don't Heroes have to work for the country in the event of an emergency?"

"Yes. That is why they are given preferential treatment."

"I'll refuse. I'm not a Hero, I am a Dungeon Master."

—That absolutely doesn't want to work.

Ah, right. Maybe she'll pardon me if I turn into Rokuko and ask nicely?

... I should stop. That might just make her mad.

"... Well, it's alright. You are a Dungeon Master after all."

Saying that, Haku-san returned to her chair.

[Father] gathered attention by clapping his hands. Monitors for Team Demon

King and Team Dragon King appeared alongside the monitor showing [Father], so it looks like he opened communication to everyone this time.

[Now then, Haku, 5, 6. I'd like you each to say something.]

"From me as the winner of this competition... 5, have you realized that you are just an ordinary lizard after all? From here on, please make sure keep that in mind and pay me tribute. You don't have to, of course. That is, if you don't think you can stomach the results of this competition that Otou-sama oversaw."

[Ugu! ... Gunuuun...]

"... 6. Please, show more discipline. To have someone refer to you as Jiji-sama, are you intending to disrespect Otou-sama? Ah, perhaps it has the meaning where you are an old fool? In that case, I have no qualms with it. Fufufu."

[Hmph. I'll overlook that.]

Haku-san, aren't you just gloating!? I'd be troubled if you caused a war to break out over this. Ah, are these not just a bunch of Dungeon Battles, but actually proxy wars between rival nations? That's super troublesome.

[I'm next then, I got second place... 89, no, Haku. We're from the same series. Since I'm an old man, aren't you an old hag? There's no point making yourself appear young. No, maybe it's due to your inability to grow up mentally that you're still such a lass. Ha ha ha. I'm so envious of your youth! Not having to face the truths of life must be nice.]

"Oh? What's this coming from the loser?"

[Hmph. 666 may have lost, but she invested in an enhancement for herself. In the long run, the true winner will be 666.]

"Fufu, so what are you saying? My Rokuko-chan preserved a considerable amount of the DP from this time. Enough to even do this another time."

She's adding fuel to the fire. We just settled down and now she's trying to start it up again!

It'd be troublesome having to do this another time, so please spare me.

[Oi, it's my turn next. Yeah? Good. This isn't my loss. This happened because of these three handicaps I had to deal with, next time—]

"Excuses are so uncouth."

[The losing lizard that only knows how to beat things with force should just keep silent. It's unsightly.]

“Speaking of unsightly, 6—”

[Kakaka, that’s it, Haku, you—]

Ah, he went quiet. And then Haku-san and Core 6 started verbally attacking each other.

... Aidi is looking at it happen from behind Core 6 like she’s envious. Huh? Is she seeing this as a caring chat or something? No way, even if you look over here with that slightly excited look and rough breathing, I’ll absolutely never have an argument with you like this one that could bring about a war!

Don’t even look at Rokuko either! But you’re friends, you say? No means no!

[Father] clapped his hands. With that, Haku-san and Core 6 immediately stopped their quarreling and looked at him.

[Otou-san is glad that everyone gets along so well. It’s regrettable, but it’s about time. Would you care to say your goodbyes?]

[Hey 695... Rokuko! It may be true that your name was recognized by Tou-sama, but don’t get so cocky! I won’t lose again!]

[Oooi, 650! What are you doing, interrupting father while he’s talking!? Looks like I’ll have to educate you even more severely... prepare yourself! 651, 652, you guys will take responsibility for this too!]

[Gekokooo!?]

[P-please forgive me, 5-samaaa!]

[Ha ha ha, I don’t mind. I did ask for their goodbyes after all. Please go easy on them for their education, 5.]

When [Father] said that with a smile, 5 didn’t say anything else.

Core 650’s face was pale even though he’s a snake.

By the way, Aidi appeared to be staring at Rokuko’s face with a smile. As for Rokuko, well, she just smiled back with the feeling that she was smiling at a friend, but—for some reason, it feels like Aidi has the same aura as Haku-san. Right, let’s pretend I saw nothing.

[Well then, everyone, let’s see each other again at the next assembly!]

The communication ended along with [Father]’s final words.
With this, our third Dungeon Battle has come to an end.

... It feels like it took a rather long time.